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Women's Perceptions of the Nature and Adequacy of Their Present Support Relationships

by

(C) Margaret J. Brackstone

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

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in

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Date ..... Oct 10, 1984 .....

DEDICATION

This work is affectionately dedicated to

Paul and Meredith

ABSTRACT

Concern is commonly expressed about the adequacy of women's social support. Typically, women are described as suffering from a "support gap" or a "relational deficit" whereby they give more support to others than they receive in return. Men are frequently faulted for not being able and/or willing to provide nurturing and emotional support to the women in their lives.

This study was undertaken to examine women's perceptions of the nature and adequacy of their present support relationships. It was intended to learn on whom women typically rely for various kinds of support, how adequate they perceive this support to be, and what changes they would like to see.

A general population sample of 100 women between the ages of 18 and 64 years, was obtained by contacting randomly selected households in the city of Edmonton.

Trained interviewers had the participants complete a modified version of the Interview Schedule For Social Interaction (ISSI: A Measure of Availability and Adequacy of Social Support) in interviews taking one and a half hours.

Results of the study indicated that the majority of women perceive themselves to receive adequate support from others. It was also evident that women feel that they receive about equal support from others in general and from their spouse/intimate, as they give in return. It was found that women, particularly married women, relied extensively on men for their social support, most often naming their male intimate

as the most supportive person in their lives. Women tended to most frequently characterize the kinds of support they received from men as "Shows Caring and Personal Interest", and "Gives Encouragement, Praise and Confidence". While women, particularly married women, relied more on men than on women for most kinds of support examined, they also expressed more dissatisfaction with the quality of the support received from their male support persons than from their female support persons. Major dissatisfactions described (regarding male support) were a lack of understanding and acceptance, and inadequate expression of appreciation for their role in the home.

These results suggest that men play a far more prominent role in providing valued social support for the women in their lives than they are generally given credit for doing.

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I. Introduction

Background of the Problem

Belle (1982) on reviewing stress research in relation to women (Dunlop, 1981; Lemkau, 1980; Makosky, 1980; Maracek, 1978; Maracek & Ballou, 1981), found that in general "little attention has been paid to women's experiences of stress" (p. 496). In particular she draws attention to one serious source of stress to women today which she feels has been overlooked. She calls this source of stress the "support gap" to describe the phenomenon whereby women give more support to others than they receive. Belle explores contemporary theories of women's psychology (Chodorow, 1974; Gilligan, 1977; Miller, 1976) and reports that women's "sense of connection to and responsibility for others ... leads women to attend to and nurture other human beings and to provide them with ... social support, or information leading the subject to believe that he is cared for, loved, esteemed, and a member of a network of mutual obligations" (p. 497). She claims that in our society the majority of social support is provided by women -- to their children, husbands and kinfolk in family relationships, -- and to clients, bosses and customers in work roles. Belle reminds us that "many studies have demonstrated that the recipients of such social support are strongly protected against the ill effects of stress" (p. 497), and she cautions that:

> While the health preserving value of receiving social support is well established, less attention has been paid to the consequences of providing social support to others. Yet a

> review of research on the impact of women's family and work roles on their own mental and physical health suggests that women's support of others may not be without cost to the women themselves, particularly when those who provide support receive little support in return (p. 498).

Belle (1982) believes that recognition of the stressfulness of this support gap is important to women in general and to the health care professionals who serve them. She attributes the prevalence of a support gap largely to the tendency that women have to provide considerable social support to the men in their lives while receiving little social support from these men in return.

In this regard Vanfossen (1981) examined sex differences and the mental health effects of expressive support and marital equity, using 2,299 adults in urban Chicago. She found that "more husbands than wives report having appreciative, affirming, affectionate, and reciprocating spouses" (p. 130). She also concluded that depression emerges from the unsupportive relationships people have with their intimate others. The findings of this study suggest that there is only "moderate validity to the claim that more wives than husbands engage in adult nurturing" yet as the author notes "the ones reporting the greater support from spouse are consistently the husbands" (p. 134). Vanfossen remarks that a substantial problem exists for persons who are deprived of the nurturant support of others.

Weissman and Klerman (1977) discuss the strong evidence that exists for a higher incidence of depression in women versus men of

every age group throughout the United States and other countries, over the past 40 years. They dispell a number of popular myths regarding this finding and report: "We have reviewed the evidence critically and believe that the sex differences in depression in Western society are, in fact, real and not an artifact of reporting or health care behaviour" (p. 109). These authors present convincing argument that the characteristics of intimate relationships contribute in significant ways to the vulnerability of women to depression. For example they cite Gove (1972, 1973) who found that:

> The higher overall rates of many mental illnesses for females are largely accounted for by higher rates for married women. In each marital status category, single, divorced, and widowed women have lower rates of mental illness than men. Being married has a protective effect for males but a detrimental effect for females (p. 106).

Weissman and Klerman (1977) report similar conclusions reached by Radloff and by Manheimer et al. in studies conducted in the United States, and by Porter in a study of depressive illness in a Surrey, England general practice. Henderson (1983 b) similarly reports that "when one looks at prevalence data by marital status and sex, a fairly consistent pattern emerges: marriage is associated with better mental health in men, but worse mental health in women" (p. 110). Bernard (1976) reports a University of Michigan study which found that women provide emotional support for their husbands far more than they receive it from them. She quotes Harding, a

former student of Jung's as saying "that for the most part men are quite unable to give women the emotional satisfaction and security they can find with their women friends" (cited in Bernard 1976, p. 231). Also O'Neil (1981) reviews the literature on sex differences in communication and discusses how men's limitations and difficulties in interpersonal communication interfere with their relationships with men and women.

Both Bernard (1976) and Vanfossen (1981) refer to the early work of Blood and Wolfe (1960) who found that husbands on the average, as perceived by wives, do not perform the "mental hygiene functions" of marriage well.

> In a sample of 730 families almost one third (31%) of the husbands responded to their wives' stress problems by criticism, by rejection, by dismissal of them as unimportant, or by merely passive listening. Almost one tenth (9%) gave advice, typical examples of which were to "get out for a while and forget it" or to "not try to do so much" (p. 231).

Bernard (1971) argues that within intimate relationships the expressive function that ought to be reciprocal, is seen instead as predominantly the task of women. She notes a further problem in that "the female way of being social -- involving bonds, affiliation, and attachment -- renders women ... more vulnerable to the stresses of deprivation of such ties" (p. 228). She expresses concern that women in general endure what she calls a "relational deficit" characterized by women relying unduly in their close relationships

on men who are "not well versed in the expression of affection and intimacy" (p. 231). Bernard recommends that women stop trivializing their female friendships as they have tended to do in the recent past, and that they begin to recognize and use these friendships as an important resource. Bernard believes that in so doing women have the best chance to "mitigate the relational deficit so many women suffer from" (p. 233).

Similarly, in the publication Toward a New Psychology of Women, Psychoanalyst Miller (1976) encourages women to be more inclined to consciously "determine the nature of their affiliations" and to "begin to choose relationships that foster mutual growth" (p. 95) as opposed to women's traditional tendency to focus on the needs and wishes of others. She maintains that although women are much more adept than are men at recognizing others needs and in responding sensitively to them, these skills are not highly valued by society. She stresses the potential strength of female friendships: "It is extremely important to recognize that the pull toward affiliation that women feel in themselves is not wrong or backward .... We can recognize this pull as the basic strength it is" (p. 95).

Sargent (1983) and Pearlin (1975) also expressed the view that women would be wise to increase their reliance on friendships with one another in order to meet their needs for social support. Sargent laments the fact that "men lack structures that support being sensitive, expressing feelings, being vulnerable or comforting others. They need the feminine competencies of empathy, dealing with emotion

and relating to others to be able to provide support" (p. 73). Pearlin (1975) reviews the social support literature and concedes that "the immediate family simply cannot easily satisfy by itself the full range of emotional and affiliative needs of women," and he joins those who are calling for greater use of female friendships to "serve as sources of emotional support" (p. 191). Pearlin, Lieberman, Menaghen, and Mullan (1981) warn that simple involvement in a close relationship is no guarantee of receiving support.

In summary, it would appear that a number of authors are expressing concern about the adequacy of women's social support and about the ability and/or willingness of men to provide this important resource to the women in their lives. Indeed some authors are suggesting that women stop looking to their husbands for the social support they need, since it is unlikely that these men have the necessary skills, and that instead women develop a greater reliance on female friendships. Counsellors are being encouraged (Pearson, 1982) to increase their clients' social support by teaching sensitivity and listening skills to support providers. Others (Caplan, 1974; Golan, 1981; Gottlieb & Shroter, 1978) have also suggested the therapeutic value of direct intervention with supporters in the patient's natural environment. Belle (1982) offers another rather innovative solution to the support gap experienced by women.

> Just as women have sought to emulate men's skills by going to assertiveness training classes, men might emulate women's skills at social support by seeking "supportiveness training". The

husband, son, father or friend who can provide social support to the women (and men) in his life is capable of combating the health destroying stress that those close to him may experience (p. 502).

In light of the apparent concern about the adequacy of women's social support, it is surprising to find that in the two studies located which examine sex differences in perception of social support, no practically significant differences emerged. Thomas and Hooper (1983) studied the social bonds of 40 healthyelderly, living independently. They found "a statistically significant relationship between internality and availability of social integration but no differences based on sex" (p. 11). Henderson, Byrne, and Duncan-Jones (1981) designed a sophisticated instrument to measure social support, then interviewed a sample of 756 members of the general population of Canberra, Australia. Although they report statistically significant sex differences on measures of availability and adequacy of social support, these are attributed to the large sample size and appear of no practical significance. Earlier, Henderson (1977) himself has postulated "that many women have less social support available to them within their primary group, or they may have a greater requirement for such support" (p. 188). However, recently Henderson (personal communication, January 4, 1984) has collected further data that support the lack of sex differences in perception of availability or adequacy of social support both in friendships and close intimate relationships. These findings are puzzling, and lead

one to query the observation of Belle (1982) that women in general suffer from a support gap. The available evidence (albeit limited to a small group of elderly, and a large group of Australians, who may differ in important ways from non-aged North Americans) suggests that this may not be a matter of concern to women themselves.

It is also surprising to note, with the concern being expressed in the literature about deficits in women's social support, that no studies have been located that examine in depth the nature of women's social support relationships. That is, we do not know on whom women typically rely for various aspects of social support. We also have very limited information regarding how women in general judge the adequacy of their social support.

Henderson et al.'s (1981) study mentioned above, was conducted to test the hypothesis "that the lack of social relationships is a causal factor in the onset of neurosis .... and significant associations were found between psychiatric symptoms, deficiencies in social relationships and recent exposure to adversity" (p. xii). However, in a sub-sample of 220 persons who were examined on three further occasions at four month intervals it was found "that deficiencies in availability of social relationships are not associated with subsequent onset of symptoms; but the perceived adequacy of relationships, both affectional and more diffuse, does predict subsequent morbidity" (p. xii). Henderson (1983 b) concludes that "it is not the supports which are available in the social environment, but how adequate they are perceived to be, which is associated with

subsequent symptom onset" (p. 114). Henderson and his colleagues (Henderson, 1983 a, 1983 b, 1984; Henderson et al., 1981; Henderson & Moran, 1983) have devoted much discussion to this finding as they have pondered "what might lie behind the report of subjectively inadequate social relationships" (Henderson et al., 1981, p. xii). Although they mention the possibility that this finding could reflect real deficiencies in the quality of support afforded by others, little attention is paid to this explanation. Instead they prefer the alternate explanation that "this may be the product of the individual's own personality and how he construes his immediate social world especially when under adversity" (Henderson et al., 1981, p. xii). They report that respondents who seemed dissatisfied with their relationships had a substantially higher risk of later developing neurotic symptoms, and that this dissatisfaction was more like a personality trait than a true lack of support from the social environment. The researchers characterized respondents who reported "wanting more" (i.e., those with low adequacy of social support scores) as probably expressing a chronic dissatisfaction with the environment and relationships, not unlike the subjects of Taylor and Chaves study (cited in Henderson, 1983 b) in England some 20 years ago who were found to have similar scores on an index of satisfaction with the environment despite residing in vastly different social environments. They found dissatisfaction to be characteristic of those with neurotic symptoms, and concluded that one's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with one's environment is far more an indication

of state of mind than of specific environment conditions. Henderson and his associates suspect the same phenomenon occurs when one evaluates the adequacy of one's social relationships.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to determine women's perceptions of the nature and adequacy of their present support relationships. The following questions provided the focus for hypotheses development.

1. Do women report adequate social support?
2. Do women perceive the majority of their social support as coming from men or from women?
3. What are women's expectations regarding social support from spouse?
4. Which sex and what roles (e.g. friend, spouse, relative, work associate) predominate as friendship and attachment figures for women, and does this vary according to the type of support given (e.g. someone to lean on versus someone to speak frankly with)?
5. When women are asked to profile their most supportive persons do they describe support received from males differently than they describe support received from females?
6. How to women's social support scores correlate with selected socio-demographic variables, and with a measure of psychological well being?
7. In what ways, if any, would women like their support persons to behave differently?
8. What do women who report "wanting more", want more of, exactly?

9. How do women rate their support relationships with others in general, and with spouse or intimate in particular, with regard to reciprocity of social support?

Significance of the Study

In light of the substantial concern being expressed by authors in the field regarding the adequacy of women's social support, it is important to enhance our understanding of women's perceptions of the nature and adequacy of their present support relationships. To date there is no account in the literature of women's perceptions of this fundamental aspect of their lives, that many theorists and clinicians are suggesting is problematic. It is important to learn what women in general are currently doing to satisfy their needs for social support, and to learn whether or not these women perceive this to be a problem area.

Understanding women's perceptions of their social support relationships is fundamental to considerations of clinical interventions designed to facilitate women in obtaining optimal social support.

II. Selected Review of the Literature

Definitions of Social Support

There exist many in depth reviews of the literature on social support (Caplan, 1979; Cassel, 1976; Cobb, 1976; Gore, 1978; Gottlieb, 1981, 1983; Henderson, Duncan-Jones, Byrne & Scott, 1980; House, 1980; Husaini, Newbrough, Neff & Moore, 1982; Janis, 1983; Leavy, 1983; Kahn & Antonucci, 1980; Pearson, 1983; Pinneau, 1976). Rather than attempting to duplicate these substantial efforts I will note the predominant directions relating to this area of study.

While the term social support has found popular usage in every day contexts, academic circles and in helping professions, terms used to describe it are varied and suggest a broad array of characteristics and functions. Henderson (1983 b) describes the concept of social support as obviously important yet vague and "regretably ... a poorly defined entity" (p. 107) with a number of currently accepted meanings. McCubbin et al. (1980) likewise conclude that "the concept of social support has been defined in a myriad of ways, making it difficult to synthesize any core definition" (p. 863). They cite as the most widely referenced definition that proposed by Cobb (1976).

> Cobb views social support as information exchanged at the interpersonal level which provides (1) emotional support, leading the individual to believe that he or she is cared for and loved; (2) esteem support, leading the individual to believe he or she is esteemed and valued; and (3) network support, leading

an individual to believe he or she belongs to a network of communication involving mutual obligation and mutual understanding. (p. 863).

Another frequently cited definition of social support is that offered by Caplan (1974).

> The significant others help the individual mobilize his psychological resources and master his emotional burdens; they share his tasks; and they provide him with extra supplies of money, materials, tools, skills and cognitive guidance (p. 13).

Caplan (1974) emphasizes the role of support persons in assisting the individual to make sense of interpersonal feedback received in day to day experiences. Caplan (1976) describes a rather sophisticated example of family members sharing

> detailed reports on their behaviour at school, work, or in social situations together with how they reacted to them, especially if these reactions were upsetting, surprising, or incomprehensible. In some families, such discussions take place regularly at meal time and have almost a ceremonial aspect. During these discussions, the other members of the group help the person evaluate not only his own reported behaviour in light of the family value system but also the meanings of the reactions of the people with whom he was involved. (p. 23)

Belle (1982) criticizes Caplan as being naively idealistic in this description of reciprocal support in families. She contends

that this genderless picture of social support "while appealing and plausible ... does not square with what we know about sex roles either in families or in the larger society". (p. 497) Others (Evans & Northwood, 1979; Wellman, 1981) have likewise criticized the assumption of egalitarian and reciprocal ties in natural helping networks, as reflecting romantic simplistic thinking.

In a most useful monograph on Social Networks and Social Support, Gottlieb (1981) recently traced historical and contemporary developments regarding the interest of community psychologists in the study of social support. He critiques early and current concepts and operational definitions of social support in a depth and breadth not feasible here. He credits Cassel, an epidemiologist, and Caplan, a social psychiatrist, with first articulating the nature and public health implications of social support in the early 1970's. However, he criticizes Caplan's omission of information regarding the structural properties and boundaries of support systems. Gottlieb encourages researchers to investigate various levels (e.g. macro mezzo, and micro) of community support systems in order to identify particular supportive functions and the role they play in health protection.

As Gottlieb (1981) notes "the nature, meaning and measurement of the social support construct are still being intensely debated in the literature" (p. 31). However, for the purposes of the present investigation the concept of social support shall be that articulated by Henderson (Henderson, 1980; Henderson et al., 1978; Henderson et al.,

1981) who critically reviewed conceptual and operational definitions in the literature and decided to focus on both close affectional bonds and more diffuse relationships as important sources of social support. Henderson relied substantially on what Weiss (1974) has identified as the six "provisions of social relationships" -- attachment, social integration, reassurance of worth, opportunity for nurturance, sense of reliable alliance, and obtaining guidance. Henderson also drew heavily on Bowlby's (1969, 1973, 1977, 1980) theory of attachment, particularly his disquisitions about the importance of affectionally close relationships between adults. Bowlby (1973) suggests that until now "insufficient recognition has been given to the enormous roles that individuals' personal and familiar environment, including his familiar companions, play in determining his emotional state" (p. 148). Henderson (Henderson et al., 1978) conceives of social support as entailing (a) Attachment -- a close sense of security provided by affectionally close relationships (such as is commonly found between spouses) and (b) Social integration -- obtained by membership in a network of persons who share common concerns and values, providing companionship, a base for social events, the sharing of common experiences and an opportunity for the exchange of services (e.g. provided by friends, work associates and casual contacts).

Role of Social Support

It has been adequately demonstrated that the recipients of social support are strongly protected against the ill effects of stress (Cassel, 1974; Cobb, 1976; Gore, 1978; Gottlieb, 1975; Greenblatt,

Becerra, & Serafetinides, 1982; Leavy, 1983; Nuckolls, Cassel, & Keplan, 1972; Todd, 1978). For instance, such support appears to (a) protect stressed individuals against depression, complications of pregnancy and child birth, negative outcomes of unemployment; (b) promote recovery of illness due to asthma, myocardial infarction or leukemia; and (c) improve response to the traumas of death, divorce and natural disasters. Henderson (1983 a) also makes reference to "several important studies in medical epidemiology (which) indicate that low social support is associated with increased mortality and increased prevalence of coronary heart disease" (p. 4).

There appears to be some general agreement regarding the manner in which social support provides health protection. For example Husaini et al. (1982) cite evidence of the buffering effects of the presence of social support in reducing vulnerability to life's stress and also evidence that a lack of support can exacerbate the impact of life's stress. Gore (1978) also describes general agreement regarding exacerbation of life's stress by low sense of social support, as well as the ability of social support to buffer the effects of life's stress. She states "it is widely understood that support increases coping ability" (p. 158). Most researchers and writers who discuss social support, according to Tucker (1982), believe that supportive relationships with significant others result in "greater resiliance to stress induced psychological and physical disorder" (p. 118). She notes that most investigators have focussed on the buffering or mediational properties of social support in crises.

In a recent review of the pertinent research Rodin (in press) concludes "that social support can buffer the individual from potentially unfavourable effects of all sorts of crises and environmental changes by facilitating coping and adaptation". She cites numerous empirical studies indicating that men and women who have social support from significant others in their own families or friendship networks ... tend to manifest higher morale, to have few somatic illnesses, and to live longer than those who do not."

Recently, several investigators have attempted to determine causality in the complex stress -- social support -- coping -- symptomatology cycle, but with inconsistent findings. Berkman & Symes (1979) and Korbin & Hendershot (1977) demonstrated that the relations between social support and symptomatology are independent of the individual's earlier psychological well being. However, Monroe's (1983) results of a prospective study of corporate employees suggest that the nature of the support -- disorder relationship may differ for physical and psychological symptoms. He explains that the existence of psychological problems may lead to a decrement in the quality of actual or perceived support, hence, social support may not be an independent, significant predictor of subsequent psychological symptoms. In the case of physical symptoms, however, low social support may predict subsequent physical symptoms, and also the presence of physical symptoms may effectively elicit social support. Therefore when physical symptoms are concerned "support may have important implications for the course of disorder (e.g. duration

and/or severity of symptoms following onset) as well as for the onset of disorder" (p. 94). Henderson et al. (1981) go beyond Monroe's postulations regarding support (and perceived support) and psychological symptoms influencing one another, to report that the adequacy of one's social support (at least one's perception of that adequacy) is quite likely dependent on underlying personality factors, especially neurotic traits. Henderson (Henderson, 1983 a, 1983 b, 1984; Henderson et al., 1981; Henderson & Moran, 1983) expresses the concern that in measuring social support, especially perceptions of adequacy of social support, we may be simply tapping basic personality constructs.

In contrast Turner (1981) who used Cobb's conceptualization of social support in studying 878 subjects in four distinctly different populations, concluded that "results of factor analysis indicated different major determinants for social support and psychological well being, suggesting that social support warrants separate consideration within both practical and theoretical development" (p. 365). Turner maintains that the most reasonable interpretation of findings to date would acknowledge the flow of causation from social support to psychological well being as well as vice versa. Tucker (1982) makes a similar observation in her review. See Leavy (1983) for a thorough evaluation of empirical evidence on the relationships among stress, social support, and psychological disorder.

Social Support in the Stress Process

A number of authors, although not attempting to determine causality, have stressed the importance of interaction between

variables in examining the construct of social support in relation to stress. McCubbin et al. (1980) review a decade of research on stress and coping and express the view that understanding coping and social support constitutes a very major domain of present day psycho-social research. They highlight the role of social support in mediating stressor events, and promoting recovery from crises. They observe that as yet we have insufficient understanding of the interplay of the critical resources of coping, social support and problem solving. Results from several longitudinal studies are examined by Pearlin et al. (1981) involving some 2300 adults. They attempt to shed further light on the stress process by identifying how various components of this process interconnect. They are in agreement with Henderson et al. (1981) in observing that to date we have no clear understanding as to what conditions determine whether the social support available will be effective in an individual circumstance. They describe two mediators of stress -- social support and coping, and outline a paradigm of the stress process in which coping and social support can intervene not only on the outcome, but at many different points in the process -- prior to an event -- between an event and the life strains it stimulates - between the strain and the diminished self-concept or prior to the stress outcome. Pearlin et al. focus particularly on the role of life strains (i.e., hardships that are an enduring testimony to one's lack of success or one's inability to avoid problems) in destroying self-concept and sense of mastery. They explain how long-standing problems, to which people

can see no end are often associated with negative self-concept in such way that damaged self-concept becomes in itself a source of stress. They conclude that as yet "little is known of the manner in which the various components of stress interconnect to form a process" (p. 337).

Joining those who caution against simplistic linear thinking about stressor to outcome is Tucker (1982). She discusses social support as a dynamic phenomenon that is in continual flux throughout one's life time. She reviews the coping research and reports that a person's activation of support available to them is often dependent on contextual factors (which are also stressed by Eckenrode & Gore, 1981), as well as internal factors such as coping preferences. She notes that characteristics of the support relationships available may also make activation more or less desirable in terms of such considerations as the repayment expected or the quality of support rendered. Tucker adds to this complex paradigm a consideration (similar to that proposed by Pearlin et al., 1981) of the impact of psychological and physical outcomes as stressors in their own right.

Recently a number of researchers have emphasized the importance of social support in contributing to the well being of individuals as opposed to the focus on its stress buffering effects. For example, Pearson (1983) contrasts the "deficiency amelioration view" of support with the "effectiveness maintenance and enhancement view", the latter of which is more useful to those involved in prevention and the support of normal development. Heller (1979) suggests that such a shift in

perspective encourages one to view social support relationships as generally equivalent to positive interpersonal relationships. Indeed Caplan's work (1974, 1976) also addressed the importance of social support in the development and maintenance of mental health. More recently Gore (1978) has emphasized the important impact that absence of social support can have on one's sense of well being. Henderson (1983 b) reports a study which found consistent if modest association between social support and psychological well being and he encourages investigators to be mindful of the potential impact of social support on positive affect, rather than psychiatric symptoms. Janis (1983) expresses a similar hunch and suggests that in time methods may be found to positively influence the mental health of large sectors of the population by strengthening social support, and that this approach may prove more feasible in stress reduction than attempting to reduce exposure to stressors. It is interesting to note that this same belief was expressed by one of the pioneers in the field, Cassel (1974) a decade earlier.

Need for Social Support Research

There is clear agreement among investigators and reviewers that considerable further study of social support is in order. For example Gottlieb (1983) emphasizes the need for further exploration of the role of social support in health protection. This need is reiterated by Gore (1978) who particularly feels we ought to better understand the impact that absence of social support can have on sense of well being.

Turner (1981) calls on future researchers to investigate what personal and social factors appear to influence perception of social support.

It is predicted by Henderson (1984) that the subject of social support will now move to a position of prominence in investigation and reporting comparable to that accorded life events research in the recent past.

More specifically, in relation to research needs concerning women and social support, one is directed to the literature review in the introductory segment giving background to the study. In addition, it is noted by Tucker (1982), who studied social support among female drug abusers, that absence of social support plays a critical role for women, and may contribute to such serious social problems as child abuse in emotionally distressed women.

Sex differences reported in "social network" investigations of support, according to Leavy (1983), suggest limited support for the notion that "women tend to have more supportive relationships than men" (p. 14). It must be remembered, however, that social network research often focuses on quantitative aspects of social ties (e.g. size of social network, frequency of contacts, homogeneity, dispersion) as opposed to the qualitative characteristics of relationships (e.g. whether or not relationships are perceived as supportive). Leavy postulates though that women not only may have more relationships, but may also have more intimate and confiding relationships, considering the traditional stereotypes that foster nurturing family interactions. He suggests that future researchers investigate how traditional versus feminist or androgynous women may differ in the support systems they have, and those they desire.

Of particular interest, Roberts, Roberts, & Stevenson (1982) compared psychiatric morbidity among 1710 women, examining the effects of marital status, employment and social support and found that only the latter variable was a significant predictor among women. They state "there is clearly a need to investigate further the role of social support on women's mental health" (p. 171).

Available Measures of Social Support

Numerous instruments have emerged in recent years purporting to measure social support. The majority of these instruments reported in the literature appear to have been developed by the author or authors conducting the particular study at hand, have not been widely used, suffer from intuitive versus theoretical underpinnings, and have not been assessed for validity and reliability (e.g., Husaini et al., 1982; Nuckolls et al., 1972; Roberts et al., 1982; Thiessen, Avery, & Joanning, 1980; Tucker, 1982; Winefield, 1979). Concepts of social support as measured in these and in other (Gore, 1978; Lin, Simeone, Ensel & Kuo, 1979; McCubbin et al., 1980) studies incorporate vastly different elements such as employment, job satisfaction, coping strategies, psychosocial assets (e.g., hostility, ego strengths, self confidence), frequency of activity outside the house, marital satisfaction and church attendance. Yet many of these authors are highly critical of the work of others who use poorly defined concepts of social support For example, Williams et al. (1981) are quite critical of many previous instruments designed to measure social support. In particular they point to the prevalance of conceptual overlap between measures of

social support and measures of mental health (e.g., instruments which tap satisfaction with work or feelings about friends). Yet in Williams et al.'s longitudinal study (of 2234 persons sampled from a general population in Seattle, Washington), conducted in an attempt to add understanding to the relationships among social support, life events and mental health; they chose as a measure of social support a brief nine-item self administered questionnaire focussing on visits with others, and number of close friends. This measure would seem rather unlikely to yield an accurate assessment of the complex phenomenon of receiving social support, and it ignores qualitative assessment of the adequacies of support altogether.

Among the more substantial and carefully developed measures of social support identified in the literature are:

1. Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL) - a perceived availability of social support measure, and Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviours List (ISSB) (Berrera, & Ainlay, 1983; Cohen & Hoberman, 1983). This instrument focuses on availability of support. It includes fun and recreation, and instrumental behaviors. It is heterogenous, and difficult to interpret.

2. Perceived Social Support from Family (PSS-FA) and Perceived Social Support From Friends (PSS-FR) - designed to measure the impact that social networks have on the individual (Procidano, & Heller, 1983). This instrument focuses on the adequacy of support.

3. Social Support Interview (SSI) - a two to three hour long semi-structured interview, and Social Network List (SNL) - detailing all

significant others, whether liked or relied on or not (Fiore et al., 1983). This interview schedule is lengthy, and includes significant others who may be perceived more as sources of stress than as sources of support (e.g. in-laws, bosses).

4. A procedure for surveying personal networks (McCallister, & Fischer, 1978) - a 20 minute survey procedure based on exchange theory of relationships, designed to identify and describe associates who are likely to be sources of rewarding exchanges. This appears to be a useful, brief survey tool.

5. Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) - a short self administered questionnaire intended to quantify the dimensions of perceived availability of and satisfaction with social support (Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarason, 1983). This appears to be a useful, self-administered screening tool. Sarason et al. (1983) acknowledge the superiority of the Interview Schedule for Social Interaction.

6. Personal Support System Survey (P3S) - an instrument that asks respondents to specify the nature of the support that they receive from each person identified as a support person. This is considered to be a helpful counselling assessment and program planning tool (Pearson, 1982). This assessment tool yields personal, subjective descriptions which are difficult to quantify.

7. Classification scheme of informal helping behaviours, useful in evaluating four classes of influence (emotionally sustaining behaviour, problem solving behaviour, indirect personal influence, environmental action) in informal social support systems (Gottlieb, 1978). This

classification scheme is well developed and is useful for lay helpers and gatekeepers.

8. Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI) - an instrument for assessing by interview the present state of an individual's social relationships including the availability, and the perceived adequacy of social support (Henderson, Duncan-Jones, Byrne, & Scott, 1980). This interview schedule yields measures of availability and adequacy of each identified component of social support. It focuses on deficiency amelioration and effectiveness maintenance aspects of social support. The instrument has been carefully developed, and has acceptable reported reliability and validity. This instrument is the main research tool selected for the present study of women's social support systems. It is described in greater detail in Chapter III.

III. Research Design and Methods

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed through exploratory and descriptive approaches to analyzing the qualitative data.

1. How do social support mean scores on the Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI) indices compare with mean scores obtained by Henderson et al.'s (1981) general population sample?

2. Which sex and what roles (e.g., friend, spouse, relative, work associate) predominate as friendship and attachment figures for women; and does this vary according to the type of support given (e.g., someone to lean on versus someone to speak frankly with)?

3. When women are asked to profile their most supportive persons, do they describe support received from males differently than they describe the support received from females?

4. a. What do women identify as ways in which they would like their support persons to behave differently?

b. When women describe ways in which they would like their support persons to behave differently, do they describe different requirements for male support persons than female support persons?

c. How do women respond when asked (1) if there was ever a time when they did get the desired supportive behaviors? (2) if so, when did it change? and (3) what they are currently doing to try and get the desired behaviors?

5. When women report "wanting more" on the Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI), what do they report wanting more of, exactly?

Hypotheses

Due to the exploratory nature of the study it was difficult to formulate specific hypotheses, yet certain directions in results were anticipated.

Hypothesis 1

The majority of women will report receiving adequate social support.

Rationale: This expectation was based on the intuitive belief of the author, that despite concerns expressed by Belle (1982), Chodorow (1974), Gilligan (1977), Miller (1976) and Vanfossen (1981), women in general do not perceive themselves to be lacking adequate social support. The work of Henderson et al. (1981) lends support to this belief by failing to find any practically significant sex differences in perceived adequacy of support.

Hypothesis 2

The majority of women will report that their most supportive person is spouse/intimate.

Rationale: Pearlin and Lieberman (1982) found the spouse to be the most effective source of help for psychological and marital problems. They also report that overall support was not as important as who provides the support.

Brown (1978) found that the presence of a close confiding relationship with the spouse or boy friend was critical in assessment of women's social support, and that the spouse was perceived as the key confident.

Reibstein (1981) also found that the more involved husbands were in the discussion of problems, the more satisfied and affirmed their wives felt in their mothering role.

Hypothesis 3a

The majority of women will report giving more support to spouse/intimate than they receive in return.

Hypothesis 3b

The majority of women will report giving more support to others than they receive in return.

Rationale for 3a and 3b: The rationale for these hypotheses was based on the expressed concerns of numerous authors (see pp. 1-7). It is this author's opinion that these concerns about women giving the majority of social support while receiving comparably little in return may be well-founded, not withstanding the fact that women may still perceive adequate support in return. This opinion is founded on the observation that interpersonal support (like love), is not an expendible resource which runs out when one gives more than one gets.

Hypothesis 3c

The majority of women will express the belief that they ought to receive as much support from spouse as they give in return.

Rationale: Although women may report giving more support to their spouse/intimate than they receive in return, it was felt that these women would clearly favor a more equitable arrangement.

Hypothesis 4

Socio-economic status as measured by the Blishen Index (Blishen, 1976) will correlate positively with scores on the Availability of Social Integration (AVSI) and Adequacy of Social Integration (ADSI) indices on the Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI).

Rationale: The work of Schwab and Schwab (1973) suggests that lower class people experience less frequent contact with friends than do their more affluent counterparts.

Belle (1982) found no evidence that low income mothers who lived close to and interacted with many relatives, experienced any mental health advantages. She also found (1983) that low income women tended to rate their neighbourhood support negatively. Brown (1975) found low income women less likely to turn to their spouse as confidant.

Others (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1969; Kessler & Cleary, 1980; Liem & Liem, 1978) have similarly found the poor to have limited access to social relationships and stable community ties.

Hypothesis 5

Adequacy of Social Interaction (ADSI) and Adequacy of Attachment (ADAT) scores on the Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI) will correlate positively with the well-being and self-acceptance scales of the California Psychological Inventory (CPI)..

Rationale: Henderson et al. (1981) have postulated that the perceived adequacy of one's social support is related to personality attributes (e.g. low perceived adequacy of support may relate to such personality traits as neuroticism, anxious attachment, and sensitivity to rejection).

Hypothesis 6

Marital status will correlate positively with scores on Availability of Attachment (AVAT) and Adequacy of Attachment (ADAT) indices on the Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI).

Rationale: Henderson et al. (1981) found availability of attachment to be highest in the marrieds, and adequacy of attachment to be lowest

in the separated and divorced in his general population sample of men and women.

Hypothesis 7

Employment will correlate positively with scores on the Availability of Social Integration (AVSI) and Adequacy of Social Integration (ADSI) indices on the Interview Schedule for Social Interaction(ISSI).

Rationale: The rationale for this hypothesis was based on the author's intuitive belief that working women have greater access to social acquaintances and friendships.

Measures

The Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI) (see Appendix 1) was developed by the Social Psychiatry Research Unit at the Australian National University. It consists of a 52 item semi-structured interview requiring approximately 45 minutes to complete. Extensive pilot work was undertaken, with cycles of question development, testing and revision over a two year period (Henderson, 1980; Henderson, Byrne, Duncan-Jones, Scott & Adock, 1980). The instrument was designed to measure the presence of (availability), and the individual's degree of satisfaction with (adequacy) current social relationships. A pre-coded interview, an interviewer's guide manual, and directions for data analysis are available. The conceptual structure of the ISSI is based on Weiss' (1974) theoretical model in which social relationships are described by the following six dimensions: attachment, social integration, reassurance of worth, opportunity for nurturance, sense of reliable alliance, and

obtaining guidance. The interviewer attempts to determine the respondent's access to the provisions of social relationships by ascertaining the availability of persons in specific roles. Questions concerning adequacy follow each of the availability items. The respondent is introduced from the start to the two-part nature of the questions: first, what does he/she have available, then how adequate is it in the sense of being too little, or as can be the case for some, too much. The first items refer to acquaintances and work associates. The next items enquire about friends. The last items refer to close affectional ties such as one might have with a marital partner. The items are followed by an Attachment Table which serves the function of providing collated information on those persons who are affectionally close to the respondent. A record is made of the relationship of each attachment figure to the respondent, the person's sex, and whether they live with the respondent or not.

In his analysis of the internal structure and properties of the ISSI, Duncan-Jones (1980) determined that availability and adequacy of social relationships could be distinguished empirically, and measured with statistical reliability. It was noted that acquaintance, reassurance of worth, and reliable alliance could usefully be merged into the provisions of "social integration" without significant loss of information.

Sarason et al. (1983) give positive commentary on the comprehensive nature of the ISSI, however, they describe it as inconvenient in relation to its length and the requirement of a personal interview.

The ISSI receives a favourable review from Weissman et al. (1981) in their evaluation of instruments currently available to assess social adjustment. They suggest that "the ISSI is potentially suitable for use with various adult populations .... It's well developed approach to the assessment of social relationships makes it ideal for studies that focus on this aspect of social functioning" (p. 1256).

The ISSI yields four main scores:

AVAT - Availiability of Attachment

ADAT - Perceived Adequacy of Attachment

AVSI - Availability of Social Integration

ADSI - Perceived Adequacy of Social Integration

For the purposes of this study the ISSI was modified slightly to facilitate clarification regarding what respondents meant by a response of "wanting more" and to reduce the length of the interview to allow for additional questions relevant to this specific investigation. Care was taken not to interfere with the process of the interview.

1. For each item answered by the response of "wanting more", the interviewer endeavored to elicit what the respondent meant by "more".

2. Some items irrelevant to computation of the four major ISSI indices were deleted. The deleted items focused on asking the respondent repeatedly whether or not his/her social support was different a year ago, and why.

3. A number of additional questions were added at the end of the interview schedule, placed so as not to interfere with the standard interview process. The additional questions were designed to profile,

in detail, the one person who overall, is currently the most supportive person in the participant's day to day life. The profile includes (1) what the individual does exactly that is so supportive; (2) in what ways, if any, the respondent would like the individual to behave differently in giving her support; (3) was there ever a time she got this, and if so, when did it stop; and (4) what is the respondent currently doing to get the desired change. The participant is also asked to profile their most supportive person of the other sex (i.e. the opposite sex from their first choice). In this way the additional questions yield specific descriptions of the individual's key male and key female support figures.

Reliability and Stability of ISSI Indices.

The reliability of the principle ISSI indices has been examined using internal consistency measures with the entire (Henderson et al. 1981) general population sample data (n = 756). To assess test - retest reliability of ISSI scores a small random sample (n = 51) were re-interviewed 18 days after the first examination. Results (Henderson et al., 1981) are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Reliability of ISSI Scores

	Internal Consistency (n=756)	Test-Retest (n=51)
AVAT	.67	.76
ADAT	.69	.71
NONAT	.37	.51
AVSI	.71	.75
ADSI	.79	.75

Validity of ISSI

Examination of the questions asked in the ISSI interview reveals that a reasonable array of behaviours, experiences and attitudes is addressed. The composition of items seems to plausibly represent the constructs selected as targets.

The authors of the ISSI (Duncan-Jones, 1981 b; Henderson et al., 1980) compared ISSI scores of several socio-economic groups, where differences could be predicted a priori. (e.g. varying marital status, age), and findings fit very well into the expected pattern. One such group was persons who had arrived in the city (of Canberra) within the previous six months. When they were compared to longer term residents they were found to have statistically significant less social integration (AVSI) available to them ($p<.01$) and what they had was judged less adequate ($p<.001$). Another such comparison was between married persons and non-married persons, with married persons showing statistically significantly more social support on three ISSI indices and a practically significant difference of more on the attachment indices (AVAT and ADAT).

Henderson et al. (1980) also examined the relationship between current behaviour and attitudes, as measured by the ISSI and more enduring personality traits as measured by the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI). The pattern of relationships was taken as supporting the validity of respondent's reports of social relationships. See Table 2.

Table 2

Product-moment Correlations of ISSI Scores With Personality Dimensions (n=225)

	Trait Neuroticism	Extraversion
AVAT	-.18	.03
AVSI	-.24	.31
ADAT	-.29	.06
ADSI	-.31	.15

Eysenck's Lie Scale was also used to assess to what degree scores might be contaminated by response style or self-presentation in an interview. Reasonably small percentages (5.7% for AVAT to 10.6% for ADSI) of variance were found to be explained by response style.

Authors also compared relevant aspects of the respondent's answers with answers of co-informants, with product moment correlations in the range of 0.20 for Adequacy of Social Integration (ADSI) to 0.59 for Availability of Social Integration (AVSI).

The California Psychological Inventory (CPI) is intended for use with non-psychiatric populations. As such, it focuses on those aspects of personality which "are related to the favorable and positive aspects of personality rather than to the morbid and pathological" (Gough, 1975, p. 5). The CPI is convenient and easy to use, with a true-false format.

Gynther (1978), the most recent reviewer of this test for the Mental Measurements Yearbook, describes the CPI as a good test, whose assets outweigh it's liabilities (e.g. a manual which has not incorporated much of the recent data on reliability and validity of the test). Gynther credits the test's author with playing a significant, active role in ongoing related research.

Two of the CPI scales measuring interpersonal personality attributes (self-acceptance and well-being) were selected for inclusion in this study, in the interest of determining to what extent self assurance, and a sense of personal worth on the one hand, and freedom from self doubt and disillusionment on the other, relate to women's perceptions of availability and adequacy of social support.

The self-acceptance (Sa) scale of the CPI was designed "to assess factors such as a sense of personal worth, self-acceptance, and capacity for independent thinking and action" (Gough, 1975, p. 10). A test-retest reliability of .71 (based on female high school students) is reported in the test manual. Validity reported in the manual is based on the scale's significant correlation, in the expected direction, with criterion groups such as graduating college students, and medical school applicants.

The well-being (Wb) scale of the CPI was designed "to identify persons who minimize their worries and complaints, and who are relatively free from self-doubt and disillusionment" (Gough, 1975, p. 10). A test-retest reliability of .72 (based on female high school students) is reported in the manual. Validity reported in the manual is based on the scale's significant correlation, in the expected direction, with such criterion groups as college students feigning anxiety, and psychiatric patients.

The correlation between Sa and Wb scales is reported to be .12 (Gough, 1975), based on a sample of 5083 females, mostly college students.

Sample

A general population sample of 100 women between the ages of 18 and 64 years, was selected by contacting sufficient, randomly selected households in the city of Edmonton, until 100 eligible women had participated.

Contacts were initially made by letter (see Appendix 2), and followed by a standardized telephone call from one of three prospective

interviewers. In 56% of appropriate households (i.e., those with one or more women 18-64 years) contacted, a woman agreed to participate in the required 1½ hour interview.

Approximately 80% of the participants were interviewed in their own homes, by their preference, and the interviews were scheduled at dates and times convenient to the women involved. Many interviews took place in the evenings or on weekends.

All interviews took place between April and June 1984.

Comparison of sample demographics with Edmonton area survey data. Sample characteristics were compared with the characteristics of the random sample (N=452) drawn for the 1984 Edmonton Area Survey (see Table 3). The personnel of the Population Research Laboratory, Department of Sociology, University of Alberta advised that this would be a more appropriate comparison than a comparison with the most recent, but out-dated 1981 Edmonton census data. It has been noted over the years that Edmonton Area Survey random sample parameters agree quite closely with census data of a similar date.

Procedure

Data collection was accomplished by personal interviews, of approximately 1½ hours in length, with each of the 100 women in the sample. The women were given every reasonable assurance of confidentiality and anonymity and were promised a written report of findings at the conclusion of the study. Each woman completed the ISSI (presented by a trained interviewer), the CPI Sa and Wb scales, and a demographic data sheet (see Appendix 3). All women were given a participation fee of $5.00, with the exception of one woman who refused to accept it.

Table 3

Comparison of Sample Characteristics and Characteristics of 1984 Edmonton Area Survey

Characteristic		Sample (N=100) (%)	1984 Edmonton area survey (N=452) (%)
Age	18-24	14	19
	25-34	44	37
	35-44	17	18.5
	45-54	12	14
	55-64	13	11.5
	(Index of dissimilarity on age = 8.5)		
Education	Elementary	1	1
	Secondary	51	47
	Post-secondary	48	52
	(Index of dissimilarity on education = 4)		
Marital status	Married	62	54.5
	Common Law	9	4
	Single	15	20.5
	Separated	2	4
	Divorced	12	14
	Widowed	0	3
	(Index of dissimilarity on marital status = 12.5)		
Employment	Employed	55	64
	Not employed	45	36
	(Index of dissimilarity on employment = 9)		
Personal income	Under 5,000	42	32
	5,000-9,900	16	13.5
	10,000-19,900	21	29
	20,000-29,900	16	17
	30,000-39,900	3	6
	40,000-49,900	2	0
	50,000 +	0	.5
			no report 2
	(Index of dissimilarity on personal income = 13.5)		
Household income	Under 10,000	16	12
	10,000-19,900	13	17
	20,000-29,900	23	21
	30,000-39,900	18	20
	40,000 +	30	30
	(Index of dissimilarity on household income = 6)		

Table 3 (continued)

Length of residence in Edmonton			
	Range	1 mo. to 62 years	1 mo. to 60 years
	Median (Months)	180 months	177 months
	Median (Years)	15 years	14.75 years
Length of residence at present address			
	Range	1 mo. to 36 years	1 mo. to 32 years
	Median (Months)	36 months	36 months
	Median (Years)	3 years	3 years

Note. The Index of Dissimilarity is a method of comparing distributions. Differences in each category (e.g. age), are summed then divided by two, thus giving the extent to which one would have to rearrange the two distributions for sameness.

Since most of the participants chose to be interviewed at home, they were asked to suggest the time of day that it would be most likely possible for the interview to be conducted in privacy and without interruptions. Many of the participants cooperated fully with this request by arranging times when room-mates or spouses were out, and/or when children were napping. Occasionally interviewers found it necessary to reiterate the need for privacy on arrival at a home, however in all cases reasonably private settings were secured (e.g., in one instance the interview was conducted in the children's bedroom while the respondent's spouse cared for the two children in the rest of the apartment). Interviews were also held in the Clinical Services, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta.

Interviewers

The three female interviewers had a minimum preparation of a baccalaureate degree with a major in the social sciences, as well as successful work experience in a setting requiring them to relate to members of the general public, and outstanding ratings on interpersonal relationships from a previous employer. More specifically, interviewer backgrounds included a B.A. with a major in Sociology, an honor's B.A. with a major in Psychology, and a M.Ed. in Counselling Psychology.

Interviewers received three weeks of training and practice in standardized use of the ISSI, under the supervision of the Project Director, a certified Psychologist. Training sessions included observation via one way mirrors, video taped feedback, and audio-taped analysis. During training the interviewers became familiar with the manner for approaching participants, instructions for completion of the CPI, and correct use of the guide notes for the ISSI. Training sessions

focused on the necessity of reading each question on the ISSI exactly as worded, giving only such standardized clarification as specified for each question. Emphasis was placed on the importance of protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

A minimum of two off-sample interviews were conducted by each interviewer at the end of two weeks of training, and interviewer performance was discussed with the supervising Psychologist. The hypotheses and research questions being addressed in the study were not discussed with two of the interviewers, although the third interviewer, as Project Director, was aware of these. To reduce the risk of unintentional interviewer bias on the part of the Project Director, a number of her practice sessions were scrutinized by the others after their training period, and all three interviewers intermittently presented audio tapes for critiquing by the other two, as data collection progressed.

During field work, very close liaison was maintained between the interviewers and the supervising Psychologist, and interviewers were encouraged to discuss any difficulties being encountered. Any ambiguities or incomplete items were referred to the interviewer involved, and when necessary participants were telephoned in order to obtain missing demographic data. At approximately the half-way point in data collection, a refresher course was given covering all parts of the data collection process, and each interviewer again submitted at least one audio tape for review.

IV Results

The .05 level of significance was used in determining the statistical significance of findings. However, since this was an exploratory study, and in such studies it is recommended (Winer, 1962) that a significance level of .1 be considered, findings which reached significance at the .1 level are also reported.

Hypothesis 1

It was anticipated that the majority of women would report receiving adequate social support.

Toward the end of the interview, respondents were asked the question:

"Considering all the different kinds of contact, support, and help we have talked about, all things considered, do you feel that you get enough from others?"

Finding. Seventy eight percent (n=78) of respondents (N=100) reported that they do get enough support from others. This response rate is significantly different from what might be expected to occur by chance $[\chi^2(1, N=100)=31.36, p < .001]$, therefore, hypothesis 1 is confirmed.

Hypothesis 2

It was expected that the majority of women would report that their most supportive person was their spouse/intimate.

Toward the end of the interview, respondents were asked the question:

"Of all the persons we have talked about, which one overall, is currently the most supportive person in your life?"

Finding. Seventy three percent (n=61) of respondents who reported having a spouse/intimate (n=84), reported that their "most supportive person" was their

spouse/intimate [$\chi^2(1, n=84)=17.19, p < .001$]. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is confirmed.

It is of interest to note that 79% ($n=55$) of the married respondents ($n=71$) reported that their spouse was the "most supportive person" in their life [$\chi^2(1, n=71)=21.42, p < .001$].

Hypothesis 3

It was anticipated that the majority of women would (a) report giving more support to spouse/intimate than they receive in return; (b) report giving more support to others in general than they receive in return; and (c) express the belief that they ought to receive as much support from spouse/intimate as they give in return.

Findings. (a) Twenty six percent ($n=22$) of respondents with spouse/intimate ($n=84$) reported giving more support to spouse/intimate than they receive in return. Hence hypothesis 3a is not confirmed. The majority (63%, $n=53$) reported giving about equal support to spouse/intimate as they receive in return [$\chi^2(2, n=84)=36.5, p < .001$]. Eleven percent ($n=9$) reported giving less support to spouse/intimate than they receive in return.

(b) Thirty three percent ($n=33$) of all respondents ($N=100$) reported giving more support to others in general than they receive from them in return. Therefore, hypothesis 3b is not confirmed. The majority (60%, $n=60$) reported giving about equal support to others in general as they receive from them in return [$\chi^2(2, N=100)=42.14, p < .001$]. Seven percent ($n=7$) reported giving less support to others in general than they receive from them in return.

(c) Ninety two percent ($n=77$) of respondents with spouse/intimate ($n=84$) expressed the belief that they ought to receive equal support from spouse/intimate

as they give in return. $[\chi^2(2, n=84)=58.33, p<.001]$. Consequently, hypothesis 3c is confirmed. Eight percent ($n=7$) of the respondents reported that they did not believe they should receive equal support from spouse/intimate as they give in return.

Hypothesis 4

It was anticipated that women's socio-economic status, as measured on the Blishen Index, would correlate positively with their AVSI (Availability of Social Integration) and ADSI (Adequacy of Social Integration) scores on the ISSI.

Findings. Analysis produced nonsignificant correlations between the Blishen Index and AVSI ($r = .15$, $p < .07$), as well as between the Blishen Index and ADSI ($r=.14$, $p < .08$). Therefore, hypothesis 4 is not confirmed. The hypothesis would be confirmed at the .1 level of significance.

Results of post hoc explpratory analysis revealed a signficant positive correlation ($r=.18$, $p < .04$) between household income and AVSI.

It is also interesting to note that a significant positive correlation ($r=.23$, $p < .01$) was found, on post hoc exploratory analysis, between the Blishen Index and ADAT (Adequacy of Attachment).

Hypothesis 5

It was expected that women's ADSI (Adequacy of Social Integration) and ADAT (Adequacy of Attachment) scores would correlate positively with the Sa and Wb scales of the CPI.

Findings. A significant positive correlation was found between Wb and ADSI ($r=.25$, $p < .006$), and between Wb and ADAT ($r=.22$, $p < .01$).

Nonsignificant relationships emerged, however, between Sa and ADSI (r=-.05, p < .30) and between Sa and ADAT (r=-.14, p < .09). Consequently, hypothesis 5 is partially confirmed. Once again, if the .1 level of significance were accepted, then an unexpected negative correlation would be said to exist between ADAT and Sa.

Results of post hoc exploratory analysis revealed a significant positive correlation (r=.35, p < .001) between AVSI (Availability of Social Integration) and Sa.

Hypothesis 6

It was anticipated that marital status would correlate positively with AVAT (Availability of Attachment) and ADAT (Adequacy of Attachment) scores on the ISSI.

Findings. A significant positive correlation (r=.44, p < .001) was found between marital status and AVAT, and between marital status and ADAT scores (r=.25, p < .001), showing that married women tended to score higher on availability and adequacy of close attachment relationships than did not marrieds. Thus hypothesis 6 is confirmed.

Analysis of variance on these support variables by marital status yielded $F(1,100)$=23.27, p < .001 for AVAT by marital status, and $F(1,100)$=6.26, p < .01 for ADAT by marital status, in favor of marrieds.

On post hoc exploratory analysis, significant positive correlations were also found between AVAT and marital satisfaction (r=.38, p < .001) and between ADAT and marital satisfaction (r=.24, p < .02). That is, women who scored higher on marital satisfaction also scored higher on availability and adequacy of close attachment relationships.

Hypothesis 7

It was anticipated that employment would correlate positively with AVSI (Availability of Social Integration) and ADSI (Adequacy of Social Integration) scores on the ISSI.

Findings. Analysis produced nonsignificant correlations between employment and AVSI/ADSI scores (r=-.09, p<.2; r=.12, p<.1). Thus, hypothesis 7 is not confirmed. Use of a .1 level of significance, however, would yield a significant positive correlation between employment and ADSI, suggesting that employed women score higher on measures of adequacy of social integration than do women who are not employed.

It is interesting to note that results of post hoc exploratory analysis revealed a significant negative correlation (r=-.18, p<.04) between employment and ADAT (Adequacy of Attachment) for the subgroup of marrieds (n=71). That is, employed married women tended to have lower scores on adequacy of close attachment relationships than did married women who were not employed.

Research Question 1

How do social support mean scores on the ISSI compare with mean scores obtained by Henderson et al.'s (1981) general population sample?

Henderson et al. have published ISSI scores by marital status and age, consequently, the findings of this study have been compared accordingly.

Findings. Considerable similarity of mean scores was noted between Henderson's sample and the sample from the present study. (see Tables 4&5). For each pair of mean scores evaluated, an assessment was made of the

Table 4

Comparison of Current ISSI Mean Scores and Henderson et al.'s (1981) ISSI Mean Scores, by Age Groups

		AVAT		
Group	N	M	SD	t
		18-24		
Current	14	6.5	1.70	0.75
Henderson	124	6.1	1.89	
		25-34		
Current	44	7.0	1.81	1.15[a]
Henderson	248	6.75	1.42	
		35-44		
Current	17	6.47	1.59	-0.07
Henderson	174	6.50	1.58	
		45-54		
Current	12	7.17	1.03	1.55[a]
Henderson	116	6.68	1.62	
		55-64		
Current	13	6.85	1.68	-0.06
Henderson	42	6.88	1.43	

[a]Adjusted for differences in variance as per Cochran & Cox

Table 4 (continued)

ADAT %

Group	N	M	SD	t
		18-24		
Current	14	68.22	16.23	-1.12
Henderson	124	75.20	22.49	
		25-34		
Current	44	68.87	22.93	-2.82**
Henderson	248	78.90	21.42	
		35-44		
Current	17	81.64	11.87	3.13[a]**
Henderson	174	78.80	21.90	
		45-54		
Current	12	86.05	14.34	0.61
Henderson	116	82.10	21.64	
		55-64		
Current	13	84.49	14.46	-1.12
Henderson	42	89.60	14.0	

[a]Adjusted for differences in variance as per Cochran & Cox

** p .01

Table 4 (continued)

AVSI

Group	N	M	SD	t
		18-24		
Current	14	9.86	2.71	0.19
Henderson	124	9.69	3.12	
		25-34		
Current	44	9.0	2.58	-1.41[a]
Henderson	248	9.38	3.47	
		35-44		
Current	17	7.94	3.07	-2.35*
Henderson	174	9.84	31.7	
		45-54		
Current	12	9.92	2.23	0.55
Henderson	116	9.37	3.34	
		55-64		
Current	13	10.0	3.54	0.13
Henderson	42	9.86	3.37	

[a] Adjusted for differences in variance as per Cochran & Cox

* $p < .05$

Table 4 (continued)

ADSI

Group	N	M	SD	t
		18-24		
Current	14	11.07	3.58	-1.32
Henderson	124	12.41	3.56	
		25-34		
Current	44	12.07	3.20	-0.29
Henderson	248	12.24	3.62	
		35-44		
Current	17	12.94	2.84	0.69
Henderson	174	12.30	3.69	
		45-54		
Current	12	13.5	2.65	-0.11
Henderson	116	13.6	2.91	
		55-64		
Current	13	13.69	2.18	-0.20
Henderson	42	13.88	3.11	

Table 5

Comparison of Current ISSI Mean Scores and Henderson et al.'s (1981) ISSI Mean Scores, by Marital Status

AVAT

Group	N	M	SD	t
		Married		
Current	71	7.23	0.90	2.54[a]*
Henderson	584	6.90	2.42	
		Single		
Current	15	5.87	1.85	0.98
Henderson	115	5.30	2.14	
		Divorced		
Current	12	6.17	1.80	1.51
Henderson	10	5.10	1.27	

[a]Adjusted for differences in variance as per Cochran & Cox

*$p < .05$

Table 5 (continued)

ADAT

Group	N	M	SD	t
		Married		
Current	71	8.73	2.43	-0.56
Henderson	584	8.90	2.42	
		Single		
Current	15	7.27	2.63	0.08
Henderson	115	7.20	3.22	
		Divorced		
Current	12	7.58	3.12	0.51
Henderson	10	6.60	5.38	

Table 5 (continued)

ADAT %

Group	N	M	SD	t
		Married		
Current	71	75.4	19.66	-1.92
Henderson	584	80.6	21.75	
		Single		
Current	15	74.9	17.20	-1.29[a]
Henderson	115	76.4	22.52	
		Divorced		
Current	12	72.5	25.75	0.30
Henderson	10	68.6	32.26	

[a]Adjusted for differences in variance as per Cochran & Cox

Table 5 (continued)

AVSI

Group	N	M	SD	t
		Married		
Current	71	9.31	2.68	-0.92
Henderson	584	9.40	2.42	
		Single		
Current	15	9.27	2.66	-0.95
Henderson	115	10.1	3.22	
		Divorced		
Current	12	8.58	3.42	-0.75
Henderson	10	9.90	4.43	

Table 5 (continued)

ADSI

Group	N	M	SD	t
		Married		
Current	71	12.37	3.09	-1.97[a]
Henderson	584	12.80	2.42	
		Single		
Current	15	12.27	2.81	-0.26
Henderson	115	12.50	3.22	
		Divorced		
Current	12	13.17	3.54	0.86
Henderson	10	11.30	6.01	

[a]Adjusted for differences in variance as per Cochran & Cox

difference in variance between the two groups. In those instances where a significant difference in variance between groups was observed, the Cochran and Cox method of determining the significance of difference between means was used. This was necessary because the t test assumes equality of population variances, and whenever this assumption is untenable, the ordinary t test should not be applied (Glass & Hopkins, 1984).

It should be noted that a significant difference of means was obtained on ADAT % for 25 to 34 year olds [$t(291)=-2.82, p<.01$], ADAT% for 35 to 44 year olds [$t(247,43)=3.13, p<.01$], using the Cochran & Cox method, and AVSI for 35 to 44 year olds [$t(190)=-2.35, p<.01$]. See Table 4.

In examining scores in relation to marital status, it should be noted that a significant difference of means was obtained on AVAT for the married subgroup [$t(583,70)=-2.54, p<.05$], using the Cochran & Cox method.

Research Question 2

Which sex and what roles predominate as friendship and attachment figures for women; and does this vary according to the type of support given?

Findings. The majority (79%) of married respondents named a male as the "most supportive person" in their lives [$\chi^2(1,n=71)=23.68, p<.001$]. In all but one instance, the male named was the spouse. Not-married respondents showed no significant preference for a male versus a female as their "most supportive person" [$\chi^2(1,n=28)=0.14, p>.1$].

No particular preference was demonstrated regarding the selection of a female family member versus a female friend as the "most supportive female" for either marrieds [$\chi^2(1,n=70)=2.06, p>.1$] or not marrieds [$^2(1,n=28)=0.57, p>.1$].

The overwhelming majority (93%) of married respondents named their spouse as the "most supportive male" in their lives $[\chi^2(1, n=71)=52.41, p<.001]$. Not married respondents showed no particular preference for intimate versus friend or family member in naming the "most supportive male" in their lives $[\chi^2(1, n=28)=1.29, p>.1]$, although very few ($n=5$) named a male friend.

Items on the ISSI addressed different kinds of support (e.g., "someone you can talk with frankly", without having to watch what you say; "someone you can share your most private feelings with"; when something unpleasant or irritating happens and you get upset or angry about it, "someone you can go to who isn't involved, and tell them just how you feel"), and for each type of support respondents were asked to name (where applicable) the one main person to whom they go. These names were entered on the Attachment Table.

Results of analysis of the Attachment Tables revealed that the married and not married respondents showed significantly different trends in the choice of male versus female support figures for the support categories of: "someone to lean on"; "someone with whom to share happiness"; "someone with whom to share sadness"; and "someone with whom to speak frankly". In each of these categories the married women tended to name a male as their main support person, whereas the not marrieds either tended to choose a female, or showed no preference for male/female. The one support category for which both marrieds and not marrieds tended to name a male, was "comforting by being held" (marrieds 94%, not marrieds 83%). It is noteworthy that for married respondents, females

did not predominate as the support person named for any category whatsoever. Not marrieds, however, tended to name women in the categories of: "someone with whom to share happiness"; "someone with whom to share sadness"; and "someone with whom to speak frankly". See Table 6.

Research Question 3

When women are asked to profile their most supportive persons, do they describe the support received from males differently than they describe the support received from females?

Procedure for Analysis. Each profile of a supportive person was analysed for common themes and ideas related to supportive behaviors. See Appendix 4 (males) and Appendix 5 (females) for lists of respondents' described support behaviors categorized under each theme.

A synthesis of the works of Colaizzi (1978), Collier and Kuiken (1976) and Vargo (1983,1984) was used in devising the following steps.

Step 1 -- Subjects' statements describing their most supportive persons were examined for specific statements or ideas which directly related to the experience which was being investigated, in this case, supportive behaviors. All expressions which did not pertain were eliminated. Lengthy descriptions were condensed to essential ideas, and redundancies were omitted, with care taken to preserve the intent of the expressed ideas.

Step 2 -- Expressions which appeared to contain the same essential idea were grouped into categories. Bases of identification for grouping were then themed and labelled.

Step 3 -- Themes and labels were then referred to the original expressions for validation.

Table 6

Comparison of Married and Not Married Women's Reliance on Male vs. Female Support as Measured on the ISSI

	Married			Not Married	
Type of Support	Male	Female	χ^2(df=1)	Male	Female
Comforting	64	4	2.21	15	3
Lean on	53	16	5.05*	12	11
Share happiness	52	17	12.48**	9	16
Share private feelings	45	17	1.74	12	9
Share sadness	39	27	4.48*	9	17
Knows me very well	38	32	2.76	10	18
Can express my anger	36	33	1.54	9	15
Can speak frankly	38	32	5.31*	8	20

Note. Underlining denotes greater reliance on males or females within married or not married groups.

*$p < .05$ **$p < .001$

Step 4 -- Themes were then divided into major and minor, determined not on the basis of relative importance, but on how often the idea was raised by participants. Major themes were those for which at least 50% of subjects expressed the same idea. If 33% of subjects expressed an idea it was regarded as a minor theme. Ideas expressed by fewer than 33% were attributed to individual differences.

Step 5 -- To establish inter-rater reliability, another reviewer (in this case, located in Vancouver), independently undertook steps 1 through 5, using a random selection of 20% of subjects' data. Vargo (1983,1984) has demonstrated that inter-rater agreement can be expected to fall in the 90-95% range.

Findings. Inter-rater reliability obtained, ranged from .71 to 1.0, with an overall reliability of .92 across categories. See Table 7.

Major themes that emerged from analysis of respondents' profiles of female support figures were (1) "Acceptance and understanding", and (2) "Available when needed".

One major theme emerged from analysis of respondents' profiles of male support figures, that of -- "Shows caring and personal interest".

Five minor themes were detected for men and five for women. See Table 8.

A χ^2 test of association confirmed a significant difference in descriptions of male versus female support persons only for the two categories of -- "Gives encouragement and praise", and "Expresses caring and personal interest". In both cases respondents were more likely to describe their male support figures in this way. See Table 8. If a .1 level of significance were accepted then a sex difference would also

Table 7

Inter-rater Reliability for Profile Themes Derived from Respondents' Descriptions of Most Supportive Persons

Theme	Judges' agreement	Reliability
Listens	9/9	1.0
Available when needed	16/16	1.0
Shows caring & personal interest	17/17	1.0
Acceptance & understanding	18/18	1.0
Useful feedback & advice	12/14	.86
Gives encouragement & praise	11/13	.85
Gives practical help	10/14	.71
Overall	93/101	.92

Table 8

Descriptions of Male vs. Female Support Persons

Support	Number of Women described n=99	%	Number of Men described n=98	%	χ^2
Acceptance & understanding	51	52[a]	42	43	2.670
Available when needed	51	52[a]	37	38	3.773
Useful feedback and advice	38	38	40	41	0.122
Listens	37	37	28	29	1.726
Shows caring & personal interest	37	37	51	52[a]	4.287*
Gives practical help	32	22	43	44	2.789
Gives encouragement & praise	30	30	48	49	7.180**
No theme identified	57		40		
Total behaviours analysed	333		329		

[a]Major theme

*$p < .05$ **$p < .01$

be detected for the theme "Available when needed" with female support figures being described more often, and "Gives practical help" with male figures being described more often.

Research Question 4

a) What do women identify as ways in which they would like their support persons to behave differently?

b) When women describe ways in which they would like their support persons to behave differently, do they describe different requirements for male support persons than for females?

c) How do women respond when asked (1) if there was ever a time when they did get the desired supportive behaviors? (a) if so, when did it change? and (3) what they are currently doing to try and get the desired behaviors?

Findings. (a) No overall trends were detected in analysing respondents' statements regarding how they would like their main support persons to behave differently.

(b) Regarding sex differences on this question, 49% of respondents (n=98) named ways in which they would like their male support persons to behave differently, whereas only 16% of respondents (n=99) cited ways in which they would like their female support persons to behave differently.

Of the 48 women who described ways in which they would like their male support person to behave differently, 42% (n=20) suggested that they would like more "Acceptance and Understanding". This constitutes a minor theme. See Appendix 6.

All other ways in which respondents reported wanting their support persons to behave differently, were attributed to individual differences.

(c) Only three respondents were able to identify a time when their main female support figures were more inclined to give them the desired supportive behaviors.

Twelve respondents were able to identify a time when their main male support figures were more inclined to give them the desired supportive behaviors. Fifty per cent (n=6) of these indicated that it was after their first baby was born that things changed for the worse. Twenty five per cent (n=3) said that things changed for the worse once they were married.

When asked how they go about trying to get what they want in their relationships with male support figures, 70% (n=15) of respondents (n=23) said they "ask him, tell him or talk about it", 13% (n=3) said they "don't try"; and others gave individual responses such as "I tease him about it"; "I've set some guidelines"; "I initiate touch" etc.

When asked how they go about trying to get what they want in their relationships with female support figures, 60% (n=3) of respondents (n=5) said they "don't try" and others gave individual responses such as "I'm working at initiating more" and "I get mad".

Research Question 5

When women report "wanting more" on the ISSI, what do they report wanting more of, exactly?

Findings. The ISSI questions which were most frequently answered by the response of "wanting more" are outlined in Table 9 along with percentage response rates. The most frequent (59%,n=53) kind of support that women (n=90) wanted more of was "Appreciation shown by people in the household".

Table 9

ISSI Questions Most Frequently Answered by the Response of "Wanting More" (N=100)

	Percentage
Appreciation shown by those at home.[a]	59
Friends I could feel free to drop in on without an invitation.	33
Number of people in my day to day life.	32
Close circle of friends.	30
Friends who would feel free to drop in anytime.	29
Being told I'm good at doing some things.	27
People with similar interests.	26
People who feel very close to me.	25

[a] n=90.

The interesting thing to note here was that 79% (n=71) of respondents who live with others (n=90), answered that they did feel that those at home really appreciate what they do for them, yet 59% (n=53, of those who live with others, n=90) wanted those at home to show their appreciation more. Furthermore, interviewers reported that often responses to this question (see Appendix 7) were rather vehemently given. Of the women who wanted those they live with to show appreciation more (n=53), 70% (n=37) specifically mentioned spouse/intimate as the individual they wanted more appreciation shown by.

In the married subgroup (n=71), 75% (n=53) expressed the belief that they were appreciated by those at home. Again, however, 61% (n=43) of them wanted this appreciation shown more.

Analysis of respondents' explanations of what they mean by "more" when they reported "wanting more" of different aspects of support, revealed mainly an array of unique responses, along with many general comments which did not serve to clarify what was meant by more.

It was interesting to note the frequency with which respondents (N=100) suggested a desire for more friends who would feel comfortable if they were to drop in unexpectedly (33%), and the number who expressed a desire for more friends who would feel free to drop in on them (29%).

Participants' Feelings About the Interviews

Ninety percent (n=79) of participants who commented on the interview (n=88) made positive or neutral remarks. Forty two percent (n=37) commented that the interview made them think, increased awareness of these matters and the like. Many respondents expressed surprise at how frequently

some names came up, not having realized how much they rely on certain people for support.

Critical comments regarding the interviews were infrequent, and focused most (n=13) on respondents finding some of the questions hard to answer, in particular having a hard time deciding who to select as the main persons relied on for various types of support. Two respondents felt the questions were too personal, while two others expressed the feeling that the questions were not personal enough. One respondent found the interview to be an emotionally painful experience, yet one of personal value to her. This particular interview was conducted by the project director, and appropriate support was provided for the respondent on terminating the interview.

V. Discussion and Conclusions

Discussion and Implications

The background literature presented in Chapter I was summarized in the following way.

> In summary, it would appear that a number of authors are expressing concern about the adequacy of women's social support and about the ability and/or willingness of men to provide this important resource to the women in their lives. Indeed some authors are suggesting that women stop looking to their husbands for the social support they need, since it is unlikely that these men have the necessary skills, and that instead women develop a greater reliance on female friendships (see p. 6).

The author of the present study expressed her hunch that "this may not be a matter of concern to women themselves" (see p. 8), and she pointed out that

> it is surprising to note, with the concern being expressed in the literature about deficits in women's social support, that no studies have been located that examine in depth the nature of women's social support relationships. That is, we do not know on whom women typically rely for various aspects of social support. We also have very limited information regarding how women in general judge the adequacy of their social support (see p. 8).

The findings of this study appear to have shed some light on these issues.

Perceived adequacy of social support. Women in this study overwhelmingly reported that they felt they receive enough support from others. This

paints a substantially different picture from that frequently presented by feminists and others who perceive women to be greatly disadvantaged in the reciprocal flow of social support (Belle, 1982; Bernard, 1976).

One possible explanation for this discrepancy might be that women have unrealistically low expectations, and/or a distorted idea regarding what constitutes enough support. That is, women may feel that they do not require and/or deserve as much support as others. A similar view is expressed by Brodsky (1980). Yet, the present finding that most women felt they receive about equal support from spouse/intimate, and from others in general, as they give in return, makes this explanation appear unlikely. Most women felt that they receive enough support, and that there is an equitable exchange of support in their important relationships.

It could be that the concern about women suffering from a "support gap" (Belle, 1982) is unduly based on conventional wisdom which is largely intuitive. This appears plausible since (1) Henderson (1981; personal communication, January 4, 1984) continues to find no sex differences in peoples' perceptions of the availability and adequacy of the social support they receive from others; and (2) since ISSI mean scores for the present sample of women are substantially similar to ISSI mean scores for Henderson et al.'s (1981) general population sample of men and women. It should be noted that many of the authors whose concerns were reported in Chapter 1 appeared to have based their reasoning on theories regarding the psychology of women (e.g., early socialization patterns, sensitivity to others, expression of affect, affiliative needs), and some evidence of sex differences in communication skills favoring women. They appear

not to have focused on Henderson's findings regarding a lack of sex differences in perceived support, nor on the work of Brown (1978) who found that women tended to name their spouse as their key confidant.

The prevalence of an intuitive notion that women in general are disadvantaged when it comes to social support, was evident during informal discussions with the participants. At the end of each interview women were promised a brief report of the findings, to be mailed out at the conclusion of the study. Many women then expressed the belief that this is a significant problem area for "other" women whereas they themselves were rather more fortunate. Thus many of the women left the interviewers with the impression that they as participants expected we would find the majority of women suffering from a support gap.

Sex and roles of support figures. Since significant differences were observed in the pattern of support relationships for married versus not married respondents, it was not felt to be appropriate to make observations embracing women in general. Also, since the number of not married women in the sample was proportionately less than the married respondents, findings regarding not married women have been interpreted with caution.

Not married women represented in this study tended to be equally as likely to rely on a male or a female as the "most supportive person" in their life. Married women overwhelmingly rely on a male as their main support figure, and in most cases this is their spouse. This finding is distinctly different from what one might anticipate from

reading the concerns of authors such as those reported in the Introduction to this study. The popular notion is that men are not willing and/or able to provide the support women need. However, the fact that these women were as likely if not married, and more likely if married, to rely on a male as their main support figure fails to corroborate such a notion.

As to whether women rely more on men or on women for different kinds of support, it appears that they rely mainly on other women only in the not married group, and even then only for three of the eight kinds of support examined on the ISSI (see Table 6). For the other kinds of support the not marrieds were equally likely to rely on males, or in the case of comforting by being held, much more likely to rely on males. The married women were much more likely to rely on men for most kinds of support examined on the ISSI, and showed no tendency to rely more on other women for any kind of support.

Furthermore, when women were asked to describe in their own words what their main support persons do exactly that is so supportive, no significant differences were noted in how they described the kinds of support they get from men and women. That is, both men and women were described in ways which could be categorized as (1) Acceptance and Understanding; (2) Available when Needed; (3) Useful Feedback and Advice; (4) Listens; (5) Shows Caring and Personal Interest; (6) Gives Practical Help; and (7) Gives Encouragement, Praise and Confidence. The men were more <u>frequently</u> described as (1) Showing Caring and Personal Interest, and (2) Giving Encouragement, Praise and Confidence. However, there was

no kind of support identified as more frequently describing women.

One gets the distinct impression, especially from married women, that other women do not play a very prominent role in the kinds of support women rely on, and that men play a much more central role than they are generally given credit for doing.

Social support and socio-demographic variables. It is puzzling to note the lack of a clear relationship between social support from friends and acquaintances, and socio-economic status as measured on the Blishen Index. Yet, the finding of a significant positive correlation between availability of this kind of support and household income, coupled with the significant positive correlation found between socio-economic status and the perceived adequacy of intimate relationships, suggests that the nature of how social support and socio-economic status relate may deserve separate study.

The finding that married women tended to obtain higher ISSI scores on the availability and adequacy of close attachment relationships corroborates the finding of Henderson et al. (1981), and makes intuitive sense. The fact that availability and adequacy of close attachment relationships also relates to marital satisfaction is not surprising.

Understanding of the role of employment in relation to social support was not enhanced in this study. The hypothesized relationship between perceived availability and adequacy of acquaintances and friendships, and employment for women was not supported. Thus we cannot say that women are any more likely to have adequate acquaintances and friendships if they are employed outside the home than if they are not.

The unexpected negative relationship which was noted between employment and the perceived adequacy of intimate relationships is an interesting finding, and one which perhaps relates to consistent findings by others (Beckman and Houser, 1979; Locksley, 1980) that employment for married women with children tends to contribute to role strain. It is possible that the role strain that employment brings for married women fosters dissatisfaction in perception of their spouses' supportive roles. Conceivably, employed family women may have higher expectations and/or greater or different needs for support in their intimate relationships.

Analysis of life events/health (as reported by respondents on the demographic data sheets) yielded no significant relationship to ISSI indices.

Social support and psychological well being. The hypothesized relationship which was confirmed between women's perceptions of the adequacy of social support and their personal sense of well being, lends support to Henderson's (1983b) findings of consistent but modest associations between social support and psychological well being. Thus it appears that women who minimize their worries and complaints and who are relatively free from self doubt and disillutionment, are also those who are more inclined to perceive their available support as adequate. The difficulty here of course, as Henderson (1984) has elaborated, is to find a way to determine to what extent, and in what ways, one influences the other, if at all.

Regarding self-acceptance and social support, the unpredicted significant positive relationship which was found between Sa and AVSI makes intuitive sense in retrospect, in that one's perception of availability, and indeed the actual availability of people for acquaintances and friendships, would understandably relate to such attributes as

sense of personal worth, and self-acceptance as measured on the Sa scale. However, the failure to find the predicted positive relationship between Sa and the perceived adequacy of social relationships is perplexing, all the more so since an unexpected negative relationship was suggested (at the .1 level of significance) between self-acceptance and perceived adequacy of intimate relationships. One cannot be confident of this particular finding as it stands, still it deserves consideration because of the important implications it may hold if indeed such a negative relationship (i.e., between Sa and ADAT) does exist for women. For example, could it be that women who are more passive, self-abasing and given to self blame (as characterizes low scorers on Sa) may be more inclined to report their marital relationship as supportive, perhaps because of their low expectations of others. Conversely, it may be that women who are intelligent, demanding, and self-confident (as characterizes high scorers on Sa) are less likely to report their marital relationships as supportive, possibly because of high expectations and/or being less appreciative of support overtures from men.

Ways in which women would like their support persons to behave differently. When asked how they would like their support persons to behave differently, women have very little to say about their female support persons, 84% expressing the feeling that their female friends and family members are just fine as they are. When asked how they would like their male support persons to behave differently, however, 50% of the respondents had specific suggestions, often made with considerable display of affect.

A significant number of the women expressed the desire for more "Understanding and Acceptance" (see Appendix 6). This desire for more "Understanding and Acceptance" takes on possible clinical significance when one considers that mainly the respondents were speaking of their marriage partners. A further possible indication of a lack of understanding and acceptance from male support figures, comes from the observation that "Understanding and Acceptance" was a major category for descriptions of female support persons, but a minor category for descriptions of males (see Table 8), although this difference was not statistically significant.

In light of the foregoing, and as reported earlier the observation that men have been found to have limitations and difficulties in interpersonal relationships (O'Neil, 1981), it may be worthwhile to encourage men to evaluate their interpersonal skills to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate understanding and acceptance (e.g., the skills of empathic listening), with their significant others. Clearly women feel that their supportive males are caring, interested, encouraging and positive in their feedback. Hence, the dissatisfactions these women feel regarding a lack of "Understanding and Acceptance" might well be the result of lack of specific skill in this area as opposed to lack of good intentions.

* What women report "wanting more" of in relation to social support. More than one half of the women who live with others reported wanting someone they live with to show their appreciation more for things

that these women do for them; and the "someone" they wanted to show it was generally their spouse/intimate. This is an interesting finding, especially in light of the fact that clearly the majority of women feel that those at home really appreciate what they do for them. So it appears that the women are aware that they are appreciated, but that this appreciation is rarely mentioned or otherwise shown. This observation appears to have clinical relevance in working with persons who live with others, particularly men who live intimately with women. It would seem desirable to facilitate more conscious recognition of feelings of appreciation, and to foster a response style which demonstrates those feelings effectively to the significant others.

Approximately one third of the respondents expressed the wish that their friends would feel more inclined to drop in on them, and to be dropped in on by them. Frequently these respondents voiced the opinion that this sort of thing would be fine with them, but they were not at all sure about their friends, and would not want to risk possible rejection. In light of this finding, it might be useful to encourage women to be clearer about expressing their preferences in this regard.

Conclusions

Overall, findings from the study indicate that women in this community feel that they receive adequate support from others.

It is also evident that women, particularly married women, rely extensively on men for their social support. They value the kind of support the men in their lives give them, and tend to characterize it

most frequently as "Expresses Caring and Personal Interest" and "Gives Encouragement, Praise and Confidence".

Married women are significantly more likely to rely on men than on women for most kinds of support examined. Indeed there was no kind of support that respondents were able to describe, or that was measured on the ISSI, for which married women seem more inclined to go to other women.

Not married women appear to rely more on other women for several kinds of support, but even they often show no such preference.

It is also apparent that women feel they receive about equal support from their spouse/intimate, and from others in general, as they give in return. Thus they do not feel disadvantaged, and would not appear to perceive themselves as suffering from a "support gap".

While women, particularly married women, are inclined to describe the men in their lives as more supportive than the women, they are also inclined to express more dissatisfactions with their male support persons than with the females. The major dissatisfactions described are a lack of understanding and acceptance, and inadequate expression of appreciation for what they do at home. One might say that women are more satisfied with the quantity of support they receive from their intimate males than with that received from females, but at the same time are somewhat less satisfied with the quality of support they receive from these men than with that received from other women.

Findings from the study give one cause to query the recommendations of such authors as Miller (1976), Pearlin (1975), and Sargent (1983) who

advise women of the need to rely on female frienships in order to meet their needs for social support. Sargent (1983) for example, maintains that "men lack structures that support being sensitive, expressing feelings, being vulnerable or comforting others" (p. 73). It could well be that women would be wise to strive for a workable balance of various kinds of support from the men and the women in their lives. At the same time it is noteworthy that in this study women, married women in particular, perceived a great deal of the support they valued, as coming from the men in their lives, predominantly their husbands, and that they perceived their current support to be adequate. As Henderson (1983b) has demonstrated "it is not the supports which are available in the social environment, but how adequate they are perceived to be" (p. 114), which is important to health concerns.

Findings from the study do not support Belle's (1982) suggestion of running supportiveness training classes for men in general to enable them to provide social support to significant others. Clearly men are providing a wide variety of substantial support, and doing it quite well in the eyes of many of the women who are recipients thereof. There is, however, support for the idea of enhancing men's considerable repertoire of support behaviors by teaching them empathic listening skills, so they might be better able to demonstrate understanding and acceptance in their intimate relationships.

Limitations

Various limitations to the present study are evident. Firstly, the random selection of Edmonton households yielded a sample which

under-represented not married women. Consequently, findings of differences in patterns of social support between marrieds and not married must be held as tentative, and relevant conclusions cannot be made about not marrieds as a group.

Secondly, perceptions of adequacy of social support as measured on the modified ISSI are just that, perceptions, and as such may not be consistent with more objective measures of adequacy, if such were available.

Thirdly, it is conceivable that the placement of the question (on the modified ISSI), about ways in which respondents would like their main support persons to behave differently, may have interefered with a complete response. This question was immediately preceded by one asking respondents to describe what their main support person does exactly that is so supportive to them. Once respondents got into a mind frame of describing the qualities they value in their support persons (by which process many respondents appeared genuinely touched), they may have been somewhat less inclined to then immediately focus on what they would like their support persons to do differently.

Suggestions for Further Research

The present study and results are in need of replication with other populations, all the more so since some of the findings are at odds with the recent conclusions of a number of cited authorities and with popular opinion.

It would be useful to conduct a similar study focusing on the characteristics and perceptions of men's social support in order to

identify areas of similarity and differences based on sex. For example, we might learn that men also feel a need for expression of the appreciation that is felt by significant others. As it stands, there is no particular reason to assume that findings for women are, or are not, equally applicable to men.

It is also recommended that the nature of the relationship of psychological well being and adequacy of perceived social support be investigated, in an effort to determine how each may influence the other.

Also, in light of the observation that some women found their spouses' support behaviors changed for the worse after marriage, or after the birth of the first baby, it would be interesting to examine what women themselves may be feeling and/or doing differently at these times which may affect the kind of support they receive.

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Appendix 1

Respondent _____

Interview Schedule for Social Interaction (ISSI) - Modified March 1984

These first questions will be about people you know a little, but who are not close friends. We are concerned here with the relationships available to you now.

1. Consider people who serve you in stores, offices, banks, etc., with whom you exchange a word or two, but whom you normally don't see apart from their work. Most days, how many people like this do you see?

None	1
1-2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
11-15	5
More than 15	6

2. Would you like more or less of this or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
More	3

(Comment)

_____

_____

_____

I will be asking this sort of question throughout this section - would you want more or less of this or is it about right.

3. On most days, how many people do you see whom you know just a little, to smile or wave to, or to say good morning to? People you do not know well - you may not know their names - but you greet each other when you pass by.

(Not counting clients or customers)

None	1
1-2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
11-15	5
More than 15	6

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(Modified March 28, 1984
University of Alberta
Department of Educational Psychology
M. Brackstone)

4. Is this about right for you, or do you wish you saw more or fewer such people?

Less	1
About right	2
More	3

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

5. These days, how many people with similar interests to you do you have contact with?

(Almost all conversation is about common interest. May include work associates, if discussion during breaks and free time)

None	1
1-2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
11-15	5
More than 15	6

6. Would you like more or less of this or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation.	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

ASK: "Are you working presently?"

7. On your job, do you usually work with others or alone?

(Contact at meals or breaks doesn't count)

Not employed (Go to Q.10)..	0
With others	1
Depends on the situation ..	2
Alone	3

8. How often do you go out with the people at work?

(Outside working hours)

Never	0
Once a year	1
A few times a year	2
Monthly	3
Weekly or more	4
Not applicable	9

9. Would you like to go out together more or less than you do, or is this about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation.	3
More	4
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

10. In an ordinary week, how many people whom you know would you say you have contact with?

(Within and particularly outside the home. Does not include strangers, clients, or customers. Respondent may volunteer phone calls)

None	1
1-2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
11-15	5
More than 15	6

11. Would you like more or less of this or is it about right for you?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation.	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

12. Overall, at present, do you wish there were more, or less or are there about the right number of people in your day-to-day life?

(May ask: "How satisfied are you with the number of your social contacts?")

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation.	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

Now I would like you to think about people you are close to.

13. How many friends do you have who could come to your home at any time and take things as they find them - they wouldn't be embarrassed if the house were untidy or you were in the middle of a meal.

(If a large number, re-read question. Do not count relatives)

None	1
1-2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
11-15	5
More than 15	6

A. Who is this mainly? (Fill in one only on Attachment Table)

14. Would you prefer more or less of this or is it about right for you?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation.	3
More	4

(Comment)

_____

_____

_____

15. How many friends do you have whom you could visit at any time, without waiting for an invitation. You could arrive without being expected and still be sure you would be welcome.

(Note the number of persons, not the number of couples)

None	1
1-2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
11-15	5
More than 15	6

A. Who is this mainly? (Fill in one only on Attachment Table)

16. Would you like to have more or fewer friends like this, or is it about right for you?

(Note number of friends)

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation..	3
More	4

(Comment)

_____

_____

_____

17. Overall, would you say you belong to a close circle of friends - a group of people who all keep in close touch with each other, or not?

(*All members feel a part of the group - probably long-term group. Common bond - not just shared activity*)

Yes	1
Qualified Response	2
No	3

18. Would you like more or less of this or is this about right for you?

(*Persons, duration or frequency*)

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation	3
More	4

(*Comment*) _____

_____

_____

19. People differ in how much they need friendship. Would you say you are the sort of person who can manage without friends or not?

Cannot manage without friends (Go to Q.20)	1
Depends on the situation	2
Can manage without friends	3

A. Do you prefer to do without friends or would you prefer to have them?

Do without	1
Have them	2
Not applicable	9

Now please think about all the people in your life. This includes the people you live with, your family, and your friends.

20. Among these, how many people are there who are available to you, whom you can talk with frankly, without having to watch what you say?

(*Confiding relationships*)

None (Go to Q. 20D)	1
1-2	2
3-5	3
6-10	4
11-15	5
More than 15	6

A. Would you like to have more or less people like this or is it about right for you?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation.	3
More	4
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

B. With the one (those) you have, would you like to feel more free to be frank or is it about right?

(Refers to the degree of intimacy sought)

About right	1
Depends on the situation.	2
More free	3
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

C. Who is this mainly that you can speak frankly with? (Fill in one only on the Attachment Table)

Go to Question 21.

D. Do you wish there were someone or not?

Yes	1
Don't know	2
No	3
Not applicable	9

21. If something unpleasant or irritating happens and you get upset or angry about it, do you have someone you can go to who isn't involved and tell them just how you feel, or not?

(To whom you can express angry feelings?)

Yes	1
Depends on the situation.	2
No (Code 0 for number, and go to Q. 21D).....	3

A. How many people like this are there?

Number ..... ____

B. Who is this mainly? (*Fill in one only on Attachment Table*)

C. Do you wish you had more or fewer people like this or is this about right?

Fewer	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation	3
More	4
Not applicable	9

(*Comment*)

Go to Question 22.

(*If no one*)

D. Is there no one you can go to in that situation, or do you prefer to keep such things to yourself?

No one	1
Depends on the situation	2
Keep things to yourself	3
Not applicable	9

22. Now I want you to think about everybody to whom you are close. Considering those you live with, your family, and friends, who above all would you say you are closest to, fondest of, most attached to?

(*Read slowly. Two people can share the same rank*)

Who would be next?

Anyone else? (*Fill in on Attachment Table for each person mentioned: Rank*)

23. Would you say you have a single, lasting relationship, someone you intend to go on sharing your life with or not?

No one (Go to Q. 23C)	___
Yes	___

A. Who is this? (*Fill in only one on Attachment Table*)

B. Do you wish you felt more certain of this or not?

Yes	1
No	2
Not applicable	9

(*Comment*)

(If no one)

C. Do you wish there were someone or do you prefer to be unattached right now?

Wishes there was someone 3
Don't know 2
Prefers to be unattached 1
Not applicable 9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

24. Now I would like to ask if there is anyone who knows you very well as a person. (This includes friends as well as family members)

No one (Go to Q. 24E)..... 1
Yes (qualified) 2
Yes 3

A. Who is this? (Fill in only one on Attachment Table: Code 2 for qualified response)

B. Would you say _____ really knows you very well indeed?

Yes 1
No 2
Not applicable 9

C. Do you wish _____ did not know you quite so well, knew you better, or is it about right?

Less 1
About right 2
Depends on the situation 3
Better 4
Not applicable 9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

D. Would you like to have someone else like this or not?

(In addition to who you have, would you like to have more people like this or not?)

Yes 1
Don't know 2
Depends on the situation ... 3
No 4
Not applicable 9

(Comment) _____

_____

E. Do you wish there were someone or not?

Yes	1
Don't know	2
No	3
Not applicable	9

25. Is there any particular person <u>you feel you can lean on</u> - someone who gives you emotional support on an ongoing basis, as well as in times of stress?

No one (Go to Q. 25D.)	1
Yes, but don't need anyone	2
Yes	3

A. What is his/her name? *(Fill in only one on the Attachment Table)*

B. Would you like to be able to get more or less emotional support from _____ or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation	3
More	4
Not applicable	9

(Comments) _____

_____

_____

C. Would you like to have someone else like this or is he/she enough?

(Would you like someone else as well, or do you have enough people you can lean on?)

Yes	1
Don't know	2
Enough	3
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

D. Is it that you have no need for such a person or do you wish there were someone?

Wish there were	1
Don't know	2
No need	3
Not applicable	9

26. Do you feel there is one particular person who feels very close to you?

(Clarify: Not necessarily that you feel close to)

No one (Go to Q. 26D) 1
Not sure 2
Yes 3

A. Who is this mainly? (Fill in only one on Attachment Table)

B. Would you like _____ to feel closer or not so close to you, or is it about right the way it is?

Closer 1
About right 2
Depends on the situation ... 3
Not so close 4
Not applicable 9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

C. Would you like to have more or fewer people like this, or is this about right?

(In addition to who you have, would you like to have more people like this, or not?)

Fewer 1
About right 2
More 3
Not applicable 9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

Go to Question 27.

If no one.

D. Do you wish there were someone or not?

Yes 1
Don't know 2
No 3
Not applicable 9

27. When you are happy, is there any particular person you can share it with - someone whom you feel sure will feel happy simply because you are?

No one (Go to Q. 27D) 0
Yes 1

A. Who is this mainly? *(Fill in only one on Attachment Table)*

B. Would you like to feel this more with _____ or is it about right?

About right 1
More 2
Not applicable 9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

C. Would you like to have someone else like this or is this enough?

(In addition to who you have, would you like some more people like this, or not?)

Yes 1
Don't know 2
Enough 3
Not applicable 9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

(If no one)

D. Do you wish there were someone or not?

Yes 1
Don't know 2
No 3
Not applicable 9

28. When you are sad, is there any particular person to whom you can go, who you feel certain will understand your feelings?

No one (Go to Q. 28D)..... 0
Yes 1

A. Who is this mainly? *(Fill in only one on Attachment Table)*

B. Would you like to feel this (understanding of sad feelings) more with _____ or is it about right?

About right	1
More	2
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

C. Would you like to have someone else like this or is this enough?

(In addition to who you have, would you like some more people like this or not?)

Yes	1
Don't know	2
Enough	3
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

Go to Question 29

(If no one)

D. Do you wish there were someone or not?

Yes	1
Don't know	2
No	3
Not applicable	9

29. At present, do you have someone <u>you can share your most private feelings with</u> or not?

No one (Go to Q. 29D)	0
Yes	1

A. Who is this mainly? *(Fill in only one on Attachment Table)*

B. Do you wish you could share more with _____ or is it about right?

About right	1
Depends on the situation ..	2
More	3
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

C. Would you like to have someone else like this as well, or is it just about right for you the way it is?

Prefers no confidant	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation.	3
Like someone else as well	4
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

Go to Question 30.

(If no one)

D. Would you like to have someone like this or would you prefer to keep your feelings to yourself?

Keep things to self	1
Like someone	2
Not applicable	9

30. Are there ever times when you are comforted by being held in someone's arms or not?

No (Go to Q. 30C.)	0
Yes	1

A. By whom mainly? (Fill in only one on Attachment Table)

B. Is there anyone you'd like to comfort you more in this way, or is it all right the way it is?

All right as is	2
Yes	1
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

Go to Question 31.

(If no one)

C. Is this because there is no one to hold you or because you prefer not being comforted that way?

No one	2
Prefer it that way	1
Not applicable	9

31. Recently have you been having any unpleasantness or rows with anyone close to you?

(Recently means: in the past month, if respondent declines to answer, Mark Yes and go on to Q. 32)

No (Go to Q. 32)	___
Yes	___

A. Who is this? (Fill up to 3 names on Attachment Table)

(For each person)

B. Would you describe this row or unpleasantness as mild, moderate or severe? (Code this on the Attachment Table)

32. How many people are there for whose care you are needed? Persons who are solely dependent on you in their day-to-day life.

(Includes children, elderly, ill or disabled)

Number (if none, code 0) ..... ___

33. Would you like to have more or less of this in your life, or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation..	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

34. Still thinking of people in your family and everyone else - how many people are there who depend on you particularly for help, or guidance, or advice on an ongoing basis?

Number (if none, code 0) ..... ___

35. Would you like to have more or less of this in your life, or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation..	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

(If respondent lives alone, go to Q. 37)

36. Do you think those at home really appreciate what you do for them, or not?

(If respondent hesitates at all say - "Would you say ..." and read the question again)

Yes	1
Not really	2
Depends on the situation...	3
Not at all	4
Not applicable	9

A. Would you like any of them to show appreciation more, or less, or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation..	3
More	4
Not applicable	9

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

37. Are there any people outside your home who really appreciate what you are doing for them?

No (Code 0 for number, and go to Q. 38)	___
Yes	___
Number	___

A. How many?

38. Would you like more of this, or less, or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation..	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

39. Do people tell you that you are good at doing some things, or not? Being praised (commended) for something you're good at, in the home, at work or elsewhere.

No (Code 0 for number, and go to Q. 40)	___
Yes	___
A. How many? Number	___

40. Would you like more of this, or less, or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation ..	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

41. Are there people around from whom you can easily ask small favours?

No (Code 0 for number, and go to Q. 42)	___
Yes	___
A. How many? Number	___

42. Would you like to have more of this, or less, or is it about right?

Less	1
About right	2
Depends on the situation...	3
More	4

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

43. (Apart from those at home) are there people to whom you can turn in times of difficulties? Someone whom you could trust and whom you could expect real help from in times of trouble?

No (Code 0 for number, and go to Q. 44) ..... ___
Yes ..... ___

A. How many? Number ..... ___

44. Do you wish you had more of such help available or is it about right?

About right 1
Depends on the situation ... 2
More 3

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

45. When things are difficult, do you find it more helpful to be with someone or to be by yourself?

Be with someone 1
Depends on the situation... 2
Be by yourself 3

(Comment) _____

_____

_____

_____

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. Considering all the different kinds of contact, support and help we have been talking about, all things considered, do you feel that you get enough from others?

   Get enough ..... ___
   Do not get enough ..... ___

2. Of all the persons we have talked about, which one overall, is currently the most supportive person in your life?

   _____

   Describe in your own words what _____ does exactly that is so supportive to you.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. In what ways, if any, would you like _____ (person named in Q. 2) to behave differently in giving you support.
   (If criticism or disappointments given, list these. Then ask "what would you like _____ to do instead of ...") (Try "What would _____ have to say or do ...")

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   A. Was there ever a time when you did get this from _____?

   Yes ____ No ____

B. If so, when did it change? _____

_____

_____

_____

C. How do you go about trying to get this (behaviors described in 3) in your relationship with _____?

_____

_____

_____

4. And which _____ (male/female, i.e., person of the other sex, depending on sex given for most supportive person above) is currently the most supportive _____ (male/female) in your life?

_____

Describe in your own words what _____ does exactly that is so supportive to you.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. In what ways, if any, would you like _____ (person named in Q. 4) to behave differently in giving you support?
(If criticism or disappointments given, list these. Then ask "What would you like _____ to do instead of ...")
(Try "What would _____ have to say or do ...")

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

A. Was there ever a time when you did get this from _____?

Yes ____ No ____

B. If so, when did it change? _____

_____

_____

_____

C. How do you go about trying to get this (behaviors described in 5) in your relationship with _____?

_____

_____

_____

6. Do you feel that you give more, less or about equal support to _____ (spouse or intimate) as you receive in return?

More ..... ____
Less ..... ____
Equal ..... ____
n/a ..... ____

7. Do you believe that you ought to receive as much support from _____ (same person as Q. 6) as you give in return?

Yes ..... ____
No ..... ____

8. Do you feel that you give more, less, or about equal support to others in general than you receive from them in return?

More ..... ____
Less ..... ____
Equal ..... ____

9. Are there any persons who are very important in giving you emotional support, but whom we have not mentioned?

Yes ____ No ____

A. Who are they, and what kind of support do they give you?

10. Having focused on these matters for the past hour, would you share with me your feelings about the interview.

RESPONDENT________

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION - ATTACHMENT TABLE

Fill in for each person mentioned in Q. 13,15, Q. 20-31						Code 1 for each question in which a person is mentioned. Only in Q.22 should person's rank be recorded (Q. 24-26 code 2 if qualified response)													For Q. 31 code for each person mentioned		
Name of person	What is his/her relationship to you?	Sex 1=M 2=F	Location: Household 1	Location: Edmonton (25mi) 2	Location: Outside Edmonton Area 3	Q.13	Q.15	Q.20	Q.21	Q.22 Rank Person	Q.23	Q.24	Q.25	Q.26	Q.27	Q.28	Q.29	Q.30	Mild 1	Moderate 2	Severe 3

Appendix 2

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

April 9, 1984

Dear Householder:

RE: EDMONTON AREA STUDY

In conjunction with the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta, a study is being conducted to learn about PATTERNS OF FRIENDSHIP AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT.

In order to gather the necessary information, we will be contacting 250 randomly selected households. Your address was one of those selected. We would greatly appreciate your participation. The success of the study depends on having a large number of persons responding to our request for a personal interview.

Our interviewers (Beth Howard, Shelly Sayer, and myself) are fully trained and comply with the high ethical standards of the University of Alberta, and the Department of Educational Psychology. We wish to emphasize that any response you give will remain absolutely confidential. The information obtained will be used only for an overall view of what Edmontonians in general report. You will receive a copy of our summary report.

Should you wish to confirm the authenticity of this study you may do so by calling Dr. H. W. Zingle, Chairman, Department of Educational Psychology, as he is overseeing the project.

Our interviewers will be phoning you within the next week in hopes of setting an interview date and time at your convenience.

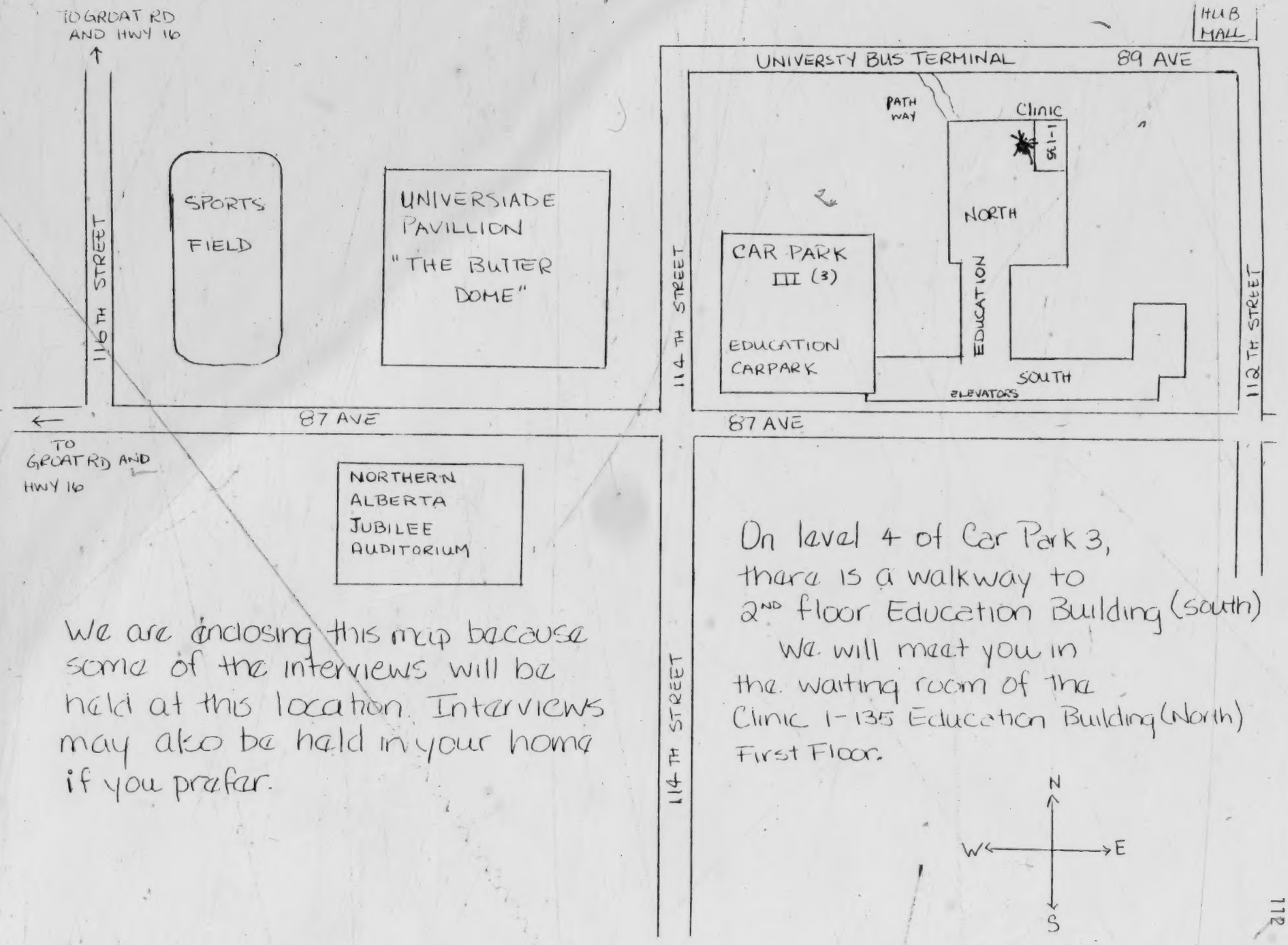
In the meantime, if you wish any further information, please call 432-2389.

Sincerely,

Margaret J. Brackstone

Margaret J. Brackstone, BScN.,MEd.
Project Director

6-102 EDUCATION NORTH, EDMONTON, ALBERTA, CANADA • T6G 2G5 • TELEPHONE (403) 432-5245



We are enclosing this map because some of the interviews will be held at this location. Interviews may also be held in your home if you prefer.

On level 4 of Car Park 3, there is a walkway to 2ND floor Education Building (south)
We will meet you in the waiting room of the Clinic 1-135 Education Building (North) First Floor.

Appendix 3

Respondent _____

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA SHEET

Date of Birth ___/___/___ (Year Month Day) Place of Birth _____

Native Language _____

Length of residence in Edmonton _____

Length of residence at present address _____

Marital Status Single Married Divorced Separated Widowed
(Please circle one)

Number of years married _____

Children:

Ages	Sex
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Occupation: _____

Place of employment _____

Number of hours per week worked (currently) _____

Husband's Occupation: _____

Husband's place of employment _____

Number of hours per week worked (currently) _____

Education: (Please give last grade or degree completed)

Elementary _____

High School _____

Post Secondary _____

Husband's Education: (Please give last grade or degree completed)

Elementary _____

High School _____

Post Secondary _____

Marital Satisfaction:

How would you decribe your present level of marital satisfaction? (Please circle one)

Extremely Unhappy and Dissatisfied	Moderately Unhappy and Dissatisfied	Mildly Unhappy and Dissatisfied	Mildly Happy and Satisfied	Moderately Happy and Satisfied	Extremely Happy and Satisfied

Personal Income Per Year (Please check one)		Total Household Income Per Year (Please check one)	
less than 5,000	_____	less than 5,000	_____
5,000 - 9,900	_____	5,000 - 9,900	_____
10,000 - 19,900	_____	10,000 - 19,900	_____
20,000 - 29,900	_____	20,000 - 29,900	_____
30,000 - 39,900	_____	30,000 - 39,900	_____
40,000 - 49,900	_____	40,000 - 49,900	_____
over 50,000	_____	over 50,000	_____

Health:

1. Have you had any serious physical, mental or emotional illness in the past year?

   Yes _____ No _____

   If so, please describe _____

2. Describe your present physical health _____

3. Describe your present emotional and mental health _____

4. Are you currently taking any medication?

   Yes _____ No _____

   If so, please list _____

Have you had any difficult life events or circumstances in the past year? (For example change of job, death in the family, break-up of an important relationship, major disappointment etc.)

Yes _____ No _____

If so, please describe these events, and give the date they occured.

_____

Understanding and Acceptance (Males)

He usually understands me very well.

He doesn't contradict me.

He's very understanding. He understands the major things too, as well as the day to day things.

I can talk to him about most things.

He knows enough about me.

He appreciates me for the way I am. He doesn't make judgements on me.

He's made my kids feel part of his family. His support is there even before I think I need it, it's there.

He senses when I'm upset and knows the problem without me telling him. He understands big things and things that may seem silly to some but are important to me.

He understands the situation. He works with me so he understands.

He's seldom critical. He just won't say something negative unless he has a definite reason. He won't criticize because he knows I feel bad about it already.

He knows what it's like at work. He knows me pretty well and my moods.

He will always accept my decisions whether it be right or wrong. He may not agree with them but he will accept them. If I make the wrong decision, he'll never come back and say, "I told you so". He'll say, "Okay, you've made the wrong decision but this is the way you've got to go from here". And we try and work that way as a team.

He gives me plenty of tea and sympathy.

Regardless of what I do he always supports it. He notices if I'm not feeling good.

I know he's supportive of what I'm doing even though he may not be involved in it. It's him being open to my interests too.

He's a very giving, unselfish boy.

He's a person I can talk to and he'll understand.

We are good enough friends that he can twig on to when you're having a good day, or when you're having a bad day. He knows when to be there and when to back off.

I can just relax and be myself with him. I can tell him why I'm upset or why I'm happy. I can discuss the things that are important to me with him. I can discuss my children with him.

I can talk to him about anything.

He just understands. He just seems to know what's wrong and what to do. If I need my time alone he knows.

He knows what is wrong or about something I haven't even allowed myself to think about.

He doesn't criticize.

He's someone I can talk to very easily.

He likes me for what I am. He just accepts my faults and good points I can be myself with him. I don't have to worry about having to hide anything.

He knows me very well. If I'm angry at him or anyone he takes it very well.

He values me as a person, not necessarily what I'll become some day.

He's very understanding.

He mostly understands that it's hard to be home with little children all the time and that I need a break. I can talk to him about anything.

He really understands.

Knowing and accepting my weaknesses as well as my strengths.

When we talk on the phone he seems to be able to capture the moment I'm describing.

He doesn't make judgements or pronouncements on me. He doesn't criticize.

He's doing his best to understand the situation.

He's very understanding.

Just his actions as much as anything, he seems to be able to comprehend and react according to the support I need.

He'll never question you.

He's really understanding. I work so much and when I come home, if I'm in a bad mood he takes it in stride.

He takes me as I am, not as a female; as a person.

He takes me the way I am. I can tell him how I feel.

He understands what's going on. He appreciates what it takes to make everything run smoothly. He'll bring it up. Like if he's been at home for the day or a couple of hours he'll say, "Gee, how do you get anything done around here?" or "It must drive you crazy at times." He knows what the problems are with the individual children.

He is aware of my needs, my moods.

Available When Needed (Males)

He's there to listen.

He just is there when I need him - he helps me by being there for me.

He's just there when you need him.

He's there all the time for me.

If I told him what I needed, comforting or support, I'd get it.

He's just there. I never really have to face anything alone.

He seems to be always there you know, to say, "Oh well do out or go for a job, I'll handle it". He's a pretty neat guy.

He's there when I need him.

He will always be there to comfort me if I need it.

He's always there for anything and everything.

He is always here to listen to me and he always fills the needs.

He's always there no matter what I have to talk about.

He's there all the time when he's needed.

He's just there (2).

He's always there when I need him (2).

He's there when I need him.

Just being there.

He's there if I need to talk to him.

He's there (3).

He's always there (3).

He's always there to listen to me.

He's there when I have a problem.

When the going gets rough, he's still there, even though I know he's rather not be.

Always being there regardless of the circumstances.

He seems always to be there when I need him, even if he's not right here.

He's always there when I want him, like for help.

He's always ready to help me.

He's somebody in the house to talk to.

If I have a problem he's there. He's a shoulder to lean on.

If there's any help that you need he's always there.

If anything goes wrong I can phone him up.

He's just there, he's around as much as he can.

He's there when you need him.

Being around when he's needed, having someone else around.

Gives Useful Feedback and Advice (Males)

By talking we work out a solution together.

He gives me feedback. He doesn't always go along with what I say. He makes me see the problem for what it is.

Unbiased point of view. With his years of wisdom he helps. He advises me without trying to make me into someone I'm not.

He never lets me get off on a tangent until I've sat down and thought things out.

He'll advise me.

If I'm worried about something, he could probably explain to me why I shouldn't worry about it.

However, he reacts good. He just reacts in the way that I would want somebody to react, under any circumstances, good or bad. If I complain about something that's really silly, he'll stop and say, "Listen, this is getting a little nit-picky here". He tries to offer constructive criticism and ideas.

He has taught me to live for the present.

If we have to sit and talk, we'll talk and he'll try and help me. If I have a problem to decide he'll help me with it.

He allows me to see alternatives I normally wouldn't see.

We talk a lot and I'm able to bounce my ideas off him.

He's very calm. He's more steady. He can usually calm me down - talk me out of things.

I have to stand on my own two feet more with him.

He's not hesitant to give me a rough time if I deserve it. He'll bring up the pros and cons of the situation, and let me figure out solutions, being aware of all the alternatives.

Things that I feel are important, he makes me think sensibly about them - like something I can't afford. Sometimes I get carried away with things and he slows me down and brings me back to earth. When I need someone re what they think, I ask him.

He calms me down.

He's there to explain things when I can't see. He points out when I'm wrong, without being hurtful.

If I were to mention feeling uncertain re my capabilities - he'd tell me he thought I was being foolish. He's say, "You're being too hard on yourself. Stop and think what you're abilities are".

He asks me what I'm going to do. He plays the "devil's advocate" - he tries to get a rise out of me and to get me to talk about it. This brings out my anger and frustration. Lots of times I don't actually know what I want or where I'm going and he causes me to defend myself and to point out what I am accomplishing and where I am going.

He seems things objectively. He has a more realistic outlook on things than I do. He asks questions and questions. In answering his questions I get a different view.

He tries to calm me down sometimes. He helps me put things in perspective. He always has new ideas, which is nice.

He's unbiased. A lot of times he seems the situation between than I do. If I'm upset, he sees the situation more calmly and rationally. He calms me down.

He might encourage me to think about life after kids, or even suggesting things I could get involved in while at home.

He makes me realize when I'm being lazy. If it hadn't been for him a lot of times I would make bad and impulsive decisions.

He sees something in me that he thinks I should work at and I don't.

He confronts me with his opinion when he doesn't agree with me. We discuss how to deal with the kids together.

He helps me make decisions. He teaches me in a sort of manner that I understand more. We sit down and figure out what would be the best method and we come to a conclusion together.

He's very calm. Even if I'm emotionally upset, he doesn't get upset. He'll ask questions that I haven't thought of. He's really sensible. He makes me think about things in a different way than I have been.

He points out where I'm wrong without being offensive.

If something happened to you like an accident, a bad thing, he won't scream after you. So by being quiet and explaining to you how come that happened. He is very stable in his temper and it really helps me to come down and explain and tell him what's going on. He's calm and patient.

He's different than some males. He is very biased and has a very different opinion. He is more realistic.

He makes me see things from a different point of view. He gives me another perspective. He gives me his own output.

He helps me to see the other side and points out things from a different perspective.

He gives his opinions.

If he does give advice, it's usually sound.

If something happens with one of the kids he gives you his opinion and you know it's sincere.

He sometimes has very good suggestions on how to get myself out of some of the pickles I get into.

Whenever I need advice he helps me as much as he can.

He gives me encouragement and advice with the same spoon.

Listens (Males)

He listens. (9)

If I'm upset, he'll listen. He'll listen to me when I need to talk.

He listens to me - I know a lot of the time that what I talk about he doesn't know anything about - because I'm kind of in a different world - but he always listens with interest. I think that can be very supportive.

He is always willing to listen - sometimes I have a hard time talking about it - but he will listen once I get the words out.

He listens to me (4).

He listens to what I'm saying. I can use him as a sounding board for ideas.

He listens whenever I need to talk. He's a good listener.

He listens. I guess that's #1, 'cause if somebody doesn't stop and listen - and not just, "Yeah, yeah" as he's doing something else.

He is a good listener (2).

He'll sit down and listen to the situation.

He's always there to listen to me when I'm excited about something whether it involves him or not.

He listens a little from time to time.

He's always willing to listen.

He listens whenever I talk.

Expresses Caring and Personal Interest (Males)

He always tries hard to please me.

He buys me something when I'm down.

When I get depressed, he brings me up. He knows how to comfort me. He comforts me through words and also physically.

I know he cares. I get a hug when I need one.

He is caring.

He makes me feel good. He makes me feel special and it's really nice. He tells me he loves me a lot.

He's really concerned about my welfare.

He's interested in learning about the things that I do. He's loving.

He spoils me. He's just very thoughtful and considerate. He never forgets a birthday or anniversary. I think that I'm the most important thing in his life. He shows his support by attending to my interests.

We just go out together or something - or go out for supper. He takes me out of the house.

He's a very considerate person. Last winter, my van had no heater and was very cold. I would get home from work, and he's have the fireplace lit and have hot almond tea and he's just waiting for me with a smile saying, "Are you cold?" And warms me up. He holds me when I need to be.

He's turned around and picked up a rose. His love shows and comes across without having to say anything.

He clearly tells me that I'm the most important person in his life. He's very affectionate.

He shows concern about me.

When I'm down he tries to cheer me up.

He'll make sure we go out to dinner, or just out somewhere when I'm feeling down.

I get a lot of support just knowing that he considers me an important part of his life. He makes me a priority and puts aside other things for that. I honestly believe he loves me.

He worries about my future and finances. He worries about me emotionally - how I'm feeling - if I'm stable. He asks me what I want to do with my life. He asks if I'm happy with me friends and associates.

He'll take me out of the house - out for tea or to play sports. He looks out for my best interests. He wants me to be happy. He worries about me and tells me when he thinks I should slow down.

He gives me a hug.

He plans for us to go out together.

He asks questions. He shows an interest in how I feel. It seems like nothing could bring him down. It makes me feel the same way too. He's always really reassuring. Sometimes he puts my feelings ahead of his own. His help makes me feel that no matter what, we'll always get through the bad times.

He hardly says anything, but there's a warm feeling that comes across.

He remembers birthdays and brings flowers.

He is a caring person, a good husband and excellent father. After a hard day when I'm beat, he will drop his work and say, "Let's go for a long walk" or "Let's go to a friends for a coffee to break the day a bit".

He loves me.

He gives me a big hug.

He gives me hugs.

He tells me he loves me.

He expresses his love verbally and non-verbally.

He cheers me up if I'm down. Or if its that bad he'll comfort me. He's really supportive in times of need.

There's physical communication as well - I guest that's important.

When we have a group of friends over he'll come up and put his arm around me and make sure that I don't feel left out because our friends are around or that he's ignoring me. He takes me out for supper when I need a break.

Our feelings of love for each other.

He shows his love to me. Loving me. He says "I love you" a lot. He'll go away fishing or something and he'll come back and say, "I missed you".

Just knowing that he loves me and I can always depend on him.

If I'm really upset, I know I can run to him and get a hug.

Physically and materially he supports me by holding me and doing things for me.

He's very good for physical affection.

He's a loving husband.

He's there to comfort me.

He gives a hug (2).

He says, "I love you". He's affectionate - a kiss. He thinks I'm very important.

There's a feeling of love, understanding, security.

He comforts me by putting his arms around me.

Gives Practical Help (Males)

He always tries hard to please me and does little things around the house without being asked. That's really great.

He does little extras - day to day things.

He cleans the yard for me and he cleaned by car. Little tasks he does are helpful.

He helps around the house.

He helps me with raising our daughter.

He helps me do things and fix things.

He cleans the house when I'm busy.

My husband helps with the child care, he cleans and washes clothes.

If I'm tired he'll do the dishes for me.

He doesn't expect me to do "female roles". It's a more sharing relationship which is supportive. By female roles I mean tasks at hom and career wise.

He'll give me a lending hand in times of need. He's very good at helping me out with the kids.

When I'm having a bad day he'll try to take a load off me. Whether it's housework or taking care of the children. Just everything.

If I'm just loaded down with a lot of things to do then he'll step in and take over some of the duties, so I don't have to do them.

He usually helps me with the dishes and cleans up. He helps me even when he comes home from work.

He does things without me telling him, that are appreciated by me.

I need help in raising our son and he seems to know when I need a rest, which to me, is supporting me. It seems to be an automatic thing. He can realize it when I've had enough or if something is wrong, he's there.

If I don't feel like making supper on the weekend, he'll do it.

He enjoys playing with the 3 year old in the evening, and that's helpful. He babysits occasionally ... like maybe once a month so I can do my own thing.

He'll take the kids when I'm frustrated or upset and get them out of my way, and let me work my frustrations out. He helps out in the house a lot if I can't always do it.

He helps with the children and the house.

He helps me out a lot around the house, e.g. housework. He looks after the kids when I want to go out.

He takes over in the home where I give up.

He helps out so much in the house when I'm working.

He helps around the house.

There are quite a few harder jobs in the home I can't do and I know that if I ask him, he's there to do it.

He helps look after his sisters.

He looks after the baby and he does a really good job.

He assists me with caring for my son and with repairs around the house and makes meals occasionally.

Gives Encouragement, Praise and Confidence (Males)

He verbally comforts me. He makes me feel that we will work it out somehow, if he has no advice on the subject.

He backs me up. He respects my thoughts.

He shows confidence in me by what he does.

He encourages me with words.

He encourages my activities outside the home.

We really stick together when it comes to the kids. He may not agree with me on how I'm handling it but he'll support me and then we'll talk about it.

There is always hope with him. With him there always seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel. He tries to make me more optimistic, by reminding me that we've been in tight spots before and we've always come through it.

He backs me up.

He makes me feel really good for being who I am.

He gives me encouragement. Gives me moral support. Builds my confidence.

He supports my ideas and backs me up. He gives me verbal reassurance.

He encourages me to do well when I'm not doing well. He positively reinforces me if I've done something well. He more or less paints a better picture of the situation. I know that he'll always be behind me in what I do.

He gives encouragement to reach the goal that I've set for myself.

He always says little things that show his support and are comforting.

Once I have made a decision, he will be there behind me.

He doesn't let people take advantage of me. He gives me some backing. He helps me say 'no' when I mean 'no'.

He compliments me.

He gives me encouragement and approval.

He always praises me a lot.

It doesn't matter what I do, he's very supportive and would never put me down. He's a real booster.

He tells me that he's proud of me. When I'm having a bad day, he'll try to take a load off me. He always compliments me on the house being clean. He always compliments me on doing a good job raising our kinds. He enjoys my company - he always tells me that. He tells me he couldn't do without me. He also tells me I'm gorgeous. He tends to make things not appear as bad as they might seem.

If I'm negative, he'll be positive. He'll show me the positive side of it.

If I ever make an effort at something new he notices it and he appreciates what I've done. He tells me every once in a while that I am appreciated.

He gives me encouragement. He encourages me to do whatever I have to as long as it makes me happy.

He compliments me to make me feel confident about what I can do concerning my work and life in general.

The fact that although the situation appears to be a crisis when I'm dealing with it myself, when I talk to him he doesn't necessarily have a solution, but the fact that we're together on it makes me feel strong. He has a lot of confidence in my judgement and decisions. Even if I make a wrong decision, he doesn't say, "I told you so". He'll say, "At the time it was the right decision".

He gives me encouragement and advice with the same spoon. He's happy with how I keep house and things like that. He speaks well of me to other people. It sometimes come back from friends.

He's behind me and I know it.

He's a wonderful believer in me basically - I never doubt his faith in me - when I doubt myself. He makes me feel better about myself. Makes me like myself better. He makes me feel stronger. He reinforces me. He admires me in many ways, and he tells me so. He applauds many of the things I do.

He takes my side - stands up for me.

He's always very confident in my abilities.

When we have company, he usually comments on how well things went.

He's willing to back me up in my ventures. He believes I know enough about what I'm doing to make my own decisions.

He may say, "Go and do it anyways" if he knows I'm capable and I don't. That kind of encouragement and support.

He believes in my ability to pursue anything I want to do. He's always very positive about me. He does things to keep me going when I'm down. He encourages me even in sports to have fun and enjoy what I'm doing, not just to be competitive.

He compliments me re how I look after the children and him.

He gives me a lot of encouragement.

He gives me encouragement or a straight talk. He expresses his appreciation for me and the things I do. He appreciates the guidance I give the children and the way I take care of the home. He says, "I'm glad you're my wife".

He's always full of compliments.

He praises me. He has always been good at making very positive comments on my achievements. It's very clear that he's proud of me.

He lets me know that he thinks my work is good. He also tells other people that he thinks my work is good. He's very proud of me. He tells me that he values me.

The little surprises that he brings home.

He makes me feel good about the contribution I make to his life. He makes me feel good about the contribution I make in the home. He makes me feel good about my appearance.

He tries to encourage me. When I worry about something, he says, "it's not so bad or it could be worse". He's optimistic.

He's there encouraging me.

He backs me up. He supports my opinion or my belief. He says, "That sounds great" or "That's okay".

He hypes me. He says things like, "Good for you girl, do what you think is best". He says, "I'll worry about you" and "Whatever I think is best for me".

He backs me up with what he says.

He encourages me in what I am doing, what I want to do. He believes in me. I know that he thinks a lot of me.

Descriptions not Categorized into Major or Minor Themes (Male)

I can talk to him.

He's got a very open mind.

We would discuss it before we made a decision.

He doesn't want his own way.

We sit a talk about it.

He's supportive by talking and communication.

We can talk about something.

He talks a fair bit about whatever is bothering him or me.

We discuss what's bothering him or what's bothering me. It's all brought out in the open.

He'll talk things out.

I've talked to him many times on the phone.

We can talk.

He leaves me alone when I want.

He lets me grow.

He allows me to be independent without asking a lot of questions. He's not a male chauvinist. He doesn't expect me to do "female roles".

He recognizes, that despite the closeness of our relationship, we both need friends that are ours exclusively.

He lets me work things out in my own way.

Most of all, he doesn't hold me back.

We have common interests. We both have the same goals.

We do things together. A sharing of interests.

We share everything.

We share the same attitude towards living in life. I think we have our long-term goals in common. He's someone you can laugh with.

We wish for the same things in life. We share the same hardships economy-wise and worries with the children.

We share the same problems.

We have common interests. We have the same goals.

He's reliable.

I know I can count on him.

He is so dependable.

He respects our family group.

He respects my opinions. There is a trust and respect in our relationship.

He respects me. We respect each other's opinions and that ties into everything.

He stands beside me.

He doesn't get excited if his dinner isn't ready.

He's always exactly the same - not moody. He takes everything in its stride.

He's very even tempered.

He's more patient than I am.

We tease each other a lot.

He's got a great sense of humor.

He tells corny jokes.

He tells me I should take things so seriously. He has a good sense of humor.

He has a good sense of humor.

Appendix 5

Understanding and Accepting (Females)

She understands. She knows when to leave me alone.

She just knows a lot of what I'm going through what with being married and having a baby.

She accepts me.

There is unconditional acceptance. As an individual with good and bad points.

She tells me, "You're fine the way you are".

She is not judgemental. She accepts my family. I can be myself with her.

She understands what a female goes through.

She sympathizes with me.

I can discuss anything with her - no holds barred.

It's an unconditional friendship.

I can talk to her about anything.

She has a lot of empathy for where I am at. When the chips are down she just knows where I'm at and she lets me talk.

She knows what it's like raising a family. She can even anticipate how I feel.

I can talk to her about anything. She's quite understanding about others. She'll be quite straightforward in her answer to you in a nice way, but sometimes clearing up what you were wondering about.

She just knows how I feel.

I know that even if I just wanted to sit and talk, that we could talk about everything and say anything and there's no questions asked. No censorship at all. I don't feel she is looking down at me because of what I say to her.

She understands, being now married and having children herself. You begin to think differently about your Mum when you have a child.

I can talk to her like a sister.

She understands. She doesn't criticize. If I wanted to go over there and put I can - no pressure.

We grew up in the same town - so she understands situations re this or that and is better able to offer advice or guidance re those people. I don't have to explain the whole context.

She really understands what we're going through. She is sensitive to my feelings.

Her acceptance of me. She's always on my side no matter what. Even in discussing family conflicts she understands.

She doesn't pass judgement. (2)

She knows all aspects of me.

We can sit and discuss anything.

I would talk with her about anything except my relationship with my husband.

A lot of times she can sympathize with how I may feel in certain circumstances.

She doesn't think I'm a bad person, even if I do something rotten.

She usually accepts me as I am and doesn't try and change me. She knows me well. I don't have to explain.

They got married around the same time and that helps her to understand where I'm at.

She can be sympathetic and understanding of how I feel. She and I can talk quite openly.

She doesn't worry about opinions of others or what society says, she wants things to be true or right for the individual. She sees people for who they are and that's what I like most about her.

She tells me my feelings are normal to feel.

I could talk to her about just about anything.

She's not disappointed that I'm not a doctor or a lawyer. She's happy that I've found something I like and I'm good at. When I visit her she appreciates the fact that I'm there. She's not looking for me to bring her things - just myself. She doesn't criticize me when I get upset, she lets me know that she knows how I feel, and that she has similar problems.

She's very sensitive to my wants and needs.

She has no question about the way I do things, but she just accepts them. She knows me so well - we grew up together.

She's understanding. I can be very open with her.

When we talk, she's always happy with what I've done with my life.

She's been through a similar situation. We have a common bond of experience.

I'm not afraid of shocking her when I talk.

I've known her since I was 5, so there's lots of things she just knows and I don't have to explain to her.

She may not agree with me, but if it's my decision she will go along with it, and still be my friend after.

She seems to know when you have a problem. She seems to know when you want to talk about it, or when you just want to be left alone and not bothered.

She's got a husband too, so she knows what I'm going through. It's just words, her comfort. She says, "I know all about it. I understand what you are feeling". She understands.

We're just content with the way we are. She accepts me the way I am and of course I do with her too.

She knows everything about me.

She knows how I feel. She has a lot of the same feelings as far as dealing with your priorities. We are on the same wavelength.

She is very supportive, but not judging. She is a very understanding person.

She really understands me.

She understands - just by doing this she makes me feel better.

She understands me (2).

I feel as though she really understands me.

Available When Needed (Females)

She's just there when I need her.

She doesn't do a lot of things, she's just there. If I need to talk to someone, she's just there.

She's there whenever I need her.

She's always there (4).

She's just there (3).

Just being there when I need someone.

If I need any help she's there right away.

She's there when I need her.

Even though there's the distance, I think if I ever had a real serious problem I'd probably pick up the phone and call her. She'll drop everything and be there.

If I needed help of any kind I would know she was there.

She's always there to talk to.

She is there to talk to me.

She's always there if I need her - very dependable.

I could call on her at any time for anything.

She always seems to have the time whenever I phone her - she's always got the time to take out of her own life just to sit and talk for a while.

And always being there. Just if anything happens, the feeling and the sense of knowing that I can turn to her no matter what it is or whatever.

I just know she's there and she'll stand by me.

She's always around.

She's very supportive. In an instant if I need to talk, she's there.

She's always available.

She's there to help me if she can.

She's always there no matter what time of the day - even if she has to work at 5 A.M. the next day - she'll sit and talk for hours on end.

She's there when I need her (2).

She's there when I need to talk to somebody.

She's supportive in the way that she's there if I want someone to talk to.

If I'm ever in trouble she'd drop anything and give me 5 minutes or an entire day - she'd break her back to help me.

She's usually there is I want to talk to her. She's easy to get at.

She's really available - I can call on her any time.

If I ever need someone to talk to, she's there.

Certainly if I had any problems, if it were possible, she'd be right there with me.

If I need to talk to her I know I can always call her up and she'll come here or I'll go down there and we can chit chat for an hour. I know that she'll always have time for me.

She's just there if I want someone to talk to.

She's just there if you need her.

She's there to support me.

I can phone her anytime of the day or night and she'll be there to help me.

She's always there if I'm sad or happy. To be happy with me or sad with me and also I guess I can really count on her.

She will always talk to me.

Its just the though of her coming, when I needed her.

I can visit her just about anytime.

She's always very welcoming. She will stop what she's doing and ask you in.

She's always willing to talk to me, even when I phone collect. (to Ireland).

She'll sit and talk.

She will give me her time on the phone.

Gives Useful Feedback and Advice (Females)

Discusses opinions and alternatives in child-rearing.

She's very unbiased.

She will keep me level-headed.

She's unsympathetic with my silliness. She tells me to smarten up. She gives me truthful answers.

I can talk to her about my problems and she gives me advice.

She is very honest and frank about her feelings, even though she knows it is going to hurt me.

She can give me a different viewpoint.

We give feedback as to what we think.

She's really honest in her opinions about what I'm telling her. She will point out if I'm being totally ridiculous or if she thinks I'm right.

She is a very careful person in whatever she does. I tend to do more and she less, but whatever she does is really well done. She tends to tone me down when I get in over my head. She can tell me something truthfully and I won't get hurt.

She is very knowledgable about various agencies where I don't know much about. Areas I'm not too familiar with, she is. She stays very calm even though I may be coming apart. She shows strength and can still think clearly. I feel secure talking to her.

She's very objective.

She's a very rational person. A thinker. She's a more sensible person.

I think she's a very wise person. She has a certain wisdom which I respect.

Her wisdom. I always get good feedback from her.

She helps me to understand me. When I'm acting in a certain way, she'll explain to me why. Rather than just telling me my faults, she helps me to understand them. She is the only person who can critisize me without putting me down or saying I'm a bad person. She teaches me to appreciate the good in everything.

We give each other help in adjusting to changes with our husbands in marriage. She helps me to put my husbands' behavior into context.

She's a very philosophical lady. She teaches me to never feel inferior. She's teaching me about life. She's trying to have me appreciate my youth and avoid making mistakes she's made.

She gives me feedback. When I tell her my problems, she can see a whole different point of view, then I can see things from a different perspective.

Just thinking and talking about things lets off steam and opens more ideas.

She criticizes a lot which is good, 'cause I don't get it at home. She'll tell me things straight out.

She doesn't interrupt. She waits 'till I'm finished, then she comments in a very positive way. Some people when you say something they say something to top it. She's not like this. She asks questions.

She points out important factors and calms me down and gets my anger down. She tries to talk you out of some things.

She's really good in taking the objective and the good things and the bad things and coming to a solution that we both agree on.

We have good arguments about raising our kids, husbands etc. that we both benefit from.

If you ask her something she gives you an honest answer.

She gives me advice and guidance.

She won't tell you what to do. She'll give you her opinion and then leaves it up to you and lets you decide.

She advises me how to go about doing certain things.

She just says, "I know why you're down and this is what helped me or this is how my situation turned out and if you persevere yours will too".

I can talk to her about my problems and she gives me comfort or advice.

She'll ask if I want advice or if I don't.

She's willing to give advice.

She gives me advice as a friend or as a mother.

She would try to solve your dilemma and give you a clue.

Any problem that I have, I can talk to her and she'll either come up with an answer or try to give me some advice.

She makes suggestions.

She offers suggestions.

She's given me lots of advice which I rarely take. It could land me in hot water.

She's given me good advice at times which has been helpful.

She primarily agrees and then she may advise.

Listens (Females)

She listens well.

She is just a good listener.

Basically being able to listen.

She listens to me.

We listen to one anothers ideas.

It's just her listening to me.

A good sounding board.

If there's something wrong she'll listen.

She's a good listener (2).

She always listens.

She listens (7).

She just listens.

She does not interfere, she just lets me talk.

She listens to me if I have problems.

If I had a problem I could go to her and know she'd listen.

She listens if I want to talk.

She's willing to listen to me.

She's always interested. She'll listen to me even if it's dull and boring in her books.

She listens when I need to talk.

She'll listen without passing judgement.

She just basically listens.

She listens mainly. She's always ready to listen to whatever I have to tell her good or bad.

She listens very well. She doesn't interrupt.

She's the type that will listen to you.

She will always listen to me whenever I have something I would like to discuss. If I have any problems or anything that is of interest to me she likes to listen to it.

She's got a pretty good ear, if I have anything to say.

She'll listen to you.

She really listens to what you are saying.

She is ready to listen. She is very supportive. Her very best thing is being a good listener.

Expresses Caring and Personal Interest (Females)

She writes and phones regularly. She says, "I wish I were closer" (She lives in Vancouver).

She's very interested in me. We talk a lot on the phone.

She is very close to me. Last night she asked if it was okay to call me 'Mum". It makes me feel good.

Even when she is not actually doing something for me, she stays around and that helps too.

She makes sure everybody buys gifts for me. She visits me. She remembers my birthday and on holidays.

She cares for me.

She always thinks of the small things. She remembers special occasions like my birthday, Christmas or Easter.

I know she cares enough to tell me something even if I don't want to hear it.

She thinks of the kids and that makes me happy.

When my daughter was really little and I was having a difficult time adjusting to her, she would frequently phone and say, "You're sounding down - pack up the kid and get over here".

She's thoughtful. She sends me little cards if I'm having a bad week or whatever. She phones and asks to see if I need to go out.

She mothers me. She babies me a bit and she's protective about my feelings.

Her sole concern is my well being, and she makes that clear.

We keep in touch on the phone. She's interested in me.

She's very caring, and very interested in what's happening. Emotionally she keeps in touch by phone and always checks how the kids are.

She's always interested.

She has my best interests at heart - my happiness.

She tells me she misses me.

She gives me comfort.

I usually talk to her every day. She cares about what we're doing.

She shows interest in everything I do.

She's affectionate - emotional.

She phones me every day.

She never forgets any special occasions. She'll phone just to talk between her letters.

She'll ask me, "How was your day". She makes me forget my bad day at work.

She's always interested in you. She always asks about what you're doing and how things turned out. She never forgets the big happenings in my life. She comes and watches my daughter dance when she can and that's important to me. She's a very thoughtful person, she remembers birthdays.

She's the most caring person and has done the most, like writing and calling to let me know she cares. She lets me know that she's praying for me - which is another caring thing.

We always keep in contact by phone. She cares and I know.

She's very concerned. I can tell when she talks that she wants the best for me and that she cares. She comes by and she phones.

She just comes over and she sits, half the time she doesn't say anything, she's just there.

She's a really caring person. She's really interested in your life and what you are doing.

She will really want to be with me at important times in my life. Since we are far away she phones a lot and write a lot too.

She cares and loves me.

If things are really tough, she'll say, "Just know that I love you and I'll always be there for you". That's comforting.

She gives me a hug and tells me she loves me.

She's another person I can go to for a hug.

Her love.

She tells me she loves me and misses me.

She says, "I love you" a lot, and hugs a lot.

She loves me for being really me. She's supportive affectionately.

Gives Practical Help (Female)

She's looked after the children a few times when she has had time off.

She helps me out with things like we have to haul laundry over to the laundromat - she does that. Or even helps me clean up without me asking. I don't have to ask - she just helps.

She comes over and bakes and cleans up the house and tells me not to be too fussy.

She'll exchange babysitting when I need to get rid of the kids.

She babysits whenever I need her to.

She'll look after my kids sometimes.

She's been helpful in looking after my children and household.

She attempts to clean the house.

She doesn't mind looking after the kids for me.

If I need help with the kids she's always willing to look after them.

She helps around the house once in a while when she has time.

Gives Encouragement, Praise, Confidence (Females)

Gives me encouragement. Makes me feel more confident.

She gives me encouragement. She gives me moral support.

She doesn't let me feel sorry for myself.

She talks me back up when I'm depressed.

She helps me not to feel so self-conscious. Makes me stand up for myself.

Moral support.

She thinks I'm wonderful, so she does a lot for my ego. She approves of the way I run my household and the way I'm bringing up my children.

She really encouraged me to go back to school. She's very positive.

Being female she always backs the female side up.

She gives me encouragement. She's be really enthusiastic when I take on a new project. If I've taken a course and come back with the marks she's excited.

She'll cheer me up, if it's something for me to worry about.

She tells me I'm not going crazy.

I know she thinks I can't do any wrong.

She tells me and gives me encouragement to stand up for myself.

She reaffirms me if I lose confidence in myself.

She points out when I'm too hard on myself.

She shows a lot of confidence in me. She feels I'm capable of doing a lot of things that I undertake.

She knows my self-confidence is poor so she tries to point out my good points. She makes me feel good to be myself. She goes out of her way to tell people what I've done or make me look good.

She's usually on my side.

She'll take my side more times than my husband very would.

She gives me a lot of encouragement. If I have a serious problem, it ends up not feeling so bad.

She tells other people that she's proud of me. She's proud of me and lets me know it. She encourages me.

She encourages me.

She makes me understand that I'm the best one to solve any problems. She has a tremendous trust in me. She really believes in me and in my abilities. She sees me as strong and capable.

No matter what kind of bad day I've had at work, I walk in the door and there's a smile on her face.

She always comments on my abilities or my personality or something. She's very positive.

I feel a lot better after talking to her about a situation.

She stands beside me. Gives me moral support. She always gives me the courage to go on. She builds up my confidence again. She never lets me tear myself down.

Encouragement. Telling me, "You can do it" or "Go for it". She will give me the good words. Positive words. She is very positive, that is the main thing.

She offers words of encouragement.

Descriptions not Categorized into Major or Minor Themes (Females)

She is very good natured.

She tries to find the lighter side of the situation.

She's very social and has great parties.

She's fun. She knows how to have a good time.

She provides humor. She's hilariously funny. I love to laugh with her and at her.

She's a fun person to be with - she's outgoing.

She has a wacky sense of humor and lets me see the funny side of things.

She doesn't force her advice on me.

I can talk things over with her.

She doesn't force her opinion.

We can relate.

I can talk to her about my problems.

Any problem that I have I can talk to her.

She does not interfere.

She doesn't force things on me.

We can relate to each other.

We communicate very well.

We discuss the situation thoroughly; she wants to know the truth and not so much what I think in my brain as what I feel in my heart.

We can discuss and elaborate on ideas.

We try to be very analytic in our situations.

She's a very close person to me, if I have any problems she's a very supportive person.

Sharing confidences. She'll just sit and compare her husband to mine and then we see how much in the same boat we really are.

She shares excitement. When I get excited, she always seems pleased for me. We share emotions. We can laugh and get raunchy together.

She is the same as me.

We talk. Just getting together and talking and sharing experiences.

We have a very mutual relationship. We share our feelings with each other a lot. We laugh a lot when we're happy and cry when we're sad.

She allows me to listen to her problems too.

At the appropriate time, she relates similar experiences. She's very generous - not just materially - but with her feelings, her support and all.

We think along the same lines on a lot of things. We are very similar. I can share a lot with her.

She'll talk to you, cry with you, feel sorry with you.

We have done and we still do cry together. We laugh together all the time.

I've helped her out in life and death situations before. I think that's another reason why we are so close.

We have a lot in common and we think a lot alike.

We go shopping together.

We have pretty well the same interests. We do hobbies together.

Our likes and dislikes have always been the same.

We take classes together and play raquetball. We have a lot of interests in common.

We enjoy each others company.

We go out quite often.

When we do get together, we always have a good time.

I can trust her.

She doesn't let you down. She's there. She's reliable. You can depend on her to do what she says she'll do.

She is completely honest in our friendship. I'd have to say that if we disagree, we will say so.

She's very open and sincere.

She's very open about herself - very outgoing. She shares her feelings openly.

She's a very open person. She's able to see beyond herself - even beyond her own beliefs.

She's very open-minded, but has an eye for how things should be.

She's rather unflappable.

She doesn't get upset or excited or anything.

She's a person I can trust if it's anything private that I have to talk about.

I know that I can speak with her and it will go no further - confidentiality is important.

If I tell her something my father wouldn't accept, she wouldn't go and tell him. She is really intimate, confidential.

She really needs me.

She really appreciates anything you do for her.

She's always thankful for what I do for our mother.

I feel comfortable around her.

I feel very comfortable with her. She brought over a couple of extra people for dinner the other night and we both felt comfortable. We are close enough that she can do that.

Ways in Which Respondents Would Like "Male" Support Persons to Behave Differently - Minor Theme of - "Understanding and Acceptance"

Sometimes I'd like him to be more understanding and less the tough guy approach. Sometimes even when he does understand, he starts to play the 'coach' - put on the coach.

When the kids are sick he says, "Don't worry so much" - that's not supportive! I'm just made that way. It frustrates me more. Obviously I can't just turn off my sad feelings just because he says so.

Not jump to conclusions re what I'm thinking or feeling. I'd like him to really understand when I'm telling him something, or explaining something. He likes to read things in.

By listening, and by talking to me like I was an intelligent individual who has something relevant to say. He likes to be the center. He knows a lot, but there's me who at times knows something more than he does and he just doesn't see it.

He could be more understanding sometimes. He gets defensive really easily in a conversation when he doesn't agree. I'd like him to be more objective about things. He sort of has a closed mind about most things, and doesn't really understand other peoples' points of view.

Sometimes it is frustrating because he likes to ask questions and argue as a game or sport almost. Sometimes we argue to a point of absolute frustration. He tries to get me to look at it in a certain way and doesn't acknowledge by feelings. If something happens at work, or on the freeway etc. and you're annoyed, and even if you're wrong - you just want to spout off about it - you don't want to analyse it or understand it. Sometimes with things regarding my grandparents etc. he isn't very supportive or understanding or problems I run into because it isn't familiar to him. It would be nice if he could stop and see things through my eyes.

I wish he could be more understanding of my feelings and viewpoint instead of his.

It's not so easy to get him to see me needs at times, without my needs seeming selfish.

He knows why I'm doing things better than I do, and I'd rather he didn't. Maybe it's just... not so much the content of what he says ... 'cause he's generally right. It's more his style of presenting it. He tends to get what I call his "Teacher Voice".

He's not the type of person you can let your emotions out to, so he really doesn't give me emotional support.

To be less critical, 'cause we've talked about that. Before you can love some other person, you have to be in the position to accept them. And he has never accepted me.

He doesn't know too much of what is going on inside the house sometimes. I guess that would be the thing, to be more aware of what's going on.

The thing that he doesn't do or doesn't accept, I have to have my own support, 'cause he won't be there to tell me it's all right,' cause he doesn't think it is.

I would like it if he understood my feelings better. He always tries. Just in some areas he can't understand how I feel. It's just the little things - nothing major. For example, just because he's always done something one way, it doesn't mean it's right. He can't understand why he has to change.

I wish he was more consistent in his understanding. One day he does understand - he is so kind and sympathetic and another day he isn't - it just depends on his mood.

Sometimes he pushes me too hard. I need to be pushed sometimes and I don't need it other times. And overpushing doesn't help. He can't slow himself down and he doesn't know when to stop.

To try and look at my side - don't just take it from his side but step into my shoes and see what it's like for me in certain situations. And there's times when he has a hard time doing that and yet once he does, then he sees where the problem is.

I have to use a lot of verbal communication to express my feelings and there's times I just wish that, "Gee, you should just know how I feel". But that's not so.

Sometimes he gives me the impression he knows how to do everything better than I can and he makes me feel as if ... not everything ... but makes me feel I just don't get things right. I'd like him to - for example, respect my own way for doing some things ... All he has to do is respect my ways ... to consider that my ways are just as good as his.

Ways in Which Respondents Would Like Those at Home to Show Appreciation More

I like to be given a pat on the back, but he doesn't voice his opinion or show his appreciation very often. Although I think he feels appreciative and notices what I do, he just doesn't usually say so.

I believe my husband is appreciative but he doesn't say it. It would give me a lift if he would say it's great sometimes, when it is.

I would like my husband to notice if I really make an effort to clean up or get organized. It takes a lot of discipline for me to do this and I need a pat on the back to feel encouraged to do it again.

If I've spent the whole day cleaning, he just notices what I haven't done. If I make an extra nice meal - he doesn't comment at all. I'd like my husband to show more appreciation. He seems to think that housework is a woman's job. Even when I work, I still do all the cooking - dishes - housework. He doesn't seem to do it.

Teenagers really don't appreciate it. Now that 2 children are grown up they realize it more. The two sons expect a lot and they don't notice what you do 'til you don't do it sometime!

Well, sometimes it seems that certain things I do are just expected of me because I'm a woman, and because they're just things his mother did. It's a spillover effect. I guess I'd like him to acknowledge that he's noticed that I've done a particular thing - e.g. ironing - rather than just taking it for granted.

My husband could show more. It would be nice if he wouldn't get so crabby when the house gets dirty. (Like when I have morning sickness all day).

My husband I think sometimes in day-to-day things, tends to forget to acknowledge the little things. I don't mean I make a big deal about it, but just to notice the tiresome, day-to-day things you do like sewing, meals, etc.

I don't think the kids realize what you're doing for them. They take everything for granted. You're just there. My husband - I do a lot around here. I'd like a little gift once in a while - a thank you, a dinner out etc. They don't know what you do. The house is always clean - they don't know what it takes.

My daughter doesn't at all. She feels mother should do everything for her. It would be nice if she helped a little without reminders. It would be nice to get thanks from her.

If I make a nice meal - he just expects it and doesn't comment. Lots of times he doesn't understand that when I come home from work I'm tired. Even if he's been off, he makes the place a mess, and makes no effort to tidy up before I come home; whereas I always do for him. Also, I wish he'd help me more with the cooking, because I do it all, but I don't think he knows how to fry an egg.

I have three brothers who are pretty reserved in their feelings - I wish they would comment more that they appreciate how much I care.

It's taken for granted that since I'm not working outside the home, I'm not doing anything. When I used to work, the family had chores and they realized more what it entails. Now the old attitudes are back. It's also taken for granted that when you're home you should work from 7 A.M. to 10 P.M. From my husband and children sometimes just a comment on how nice something looks, or a willingness to do a chore to help would be nice - or a suggestion re eating out.

To verbalize and to notice things. This is the first time, I've been home all the time, so I'm doing more things - like I've never done his laundry before. It would be nice if he would notice these things.

Around the house. Like if I make his lung, or I went on a baking spree before Christmas, the freezer was just full of stuff. It was "that's great" but it wasn't as enthusiastic as I thought it would be. Like more verbal appreciation, it was a lot of work!

For them to tell you more often, more verbal.

I would just like her to say, "Okay, you mow the lawn and do this and that outside and I will do the dishes or this and that in the house", but she just sits there like a queen.

You clean the house and nobody sees it. Sometimes I wonder if they really know what it all means to go and clean sheets and beds. But what you do during the day, they don't acknowledge that. I'd like them to say it sometimes. But if you have to drag it out of them it's not the same.

I'd like a tap on the back. "Thanks a lot". More verbal.

He's giving appreciation, but maybe not the way you want it. More verbal I think, instead of giving gifts or presents.

Respect, knowing where they are and to keep up daily routines, and daily chores.

My husband sometimes takes things for granted. More verbal.

I guess more thank yous from the children.

My husband takes everything for granted.

Just by verbally expressing it more often. (Their appreciation). He has a tendency to talk about the bad aspects of a situation (i.e. the housework) and take for granted the good ones. He works long days but he just doesn't express his appreciation.

Just to have them verbalize it more would be nice.

I know I'm appreciated but it's nice to hear it more.

They could show it more. They take you for granted around the house. I want appreciation in action, not in words. Like they could do those little jobs and errands too.

Just to say thanks more often.

I suppose sometimes I'd like them to show it more. Just saying thank you more often.

Just to help me out more and appreciate that what I do takes a lot of energy and time.

Even if they just said thank you every now and again I'd be happy. He knows I love flowers, but I never see any except on Mother's Day or when I have another kid.

To say thank you.

I'd like them to show it more. By helping around the house and with errands.

Maybe to say once in a while - thank you. It's just the little things. A simple thank you.

Verbally. When you come home and you get a good meal and the house is really clean I'd like a little acknowledgement of it.

Just to say thank you once in a while.

A simple thank you every now and again would suffice.

They could show it more by putting more effort into things. The things I ask my family to do.

From my husband, probably if there were more thank yous or if he did some of the chores. 'Cause if he did some, he'd realize how much time it actually does take.

I wouldn't mind at all if my two sons would show more appreciation. Both verbally and by helping out.

More help, especially with the housework. Even if he takes the vacuum cleaner and vacuums the house once through for me I would appreciate it so much.

To verbalize it more.

Just more in the form of respect from my kids.

Verbally would be nice.